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THE PHILOSOPHICAL BASES OF HUMAN LIBERTY
ACCORDING TO ST. THOMAS AQUINAS

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA
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THE PHILOSOPHICAL BASES OF
HUMAN LIBERTY ACCORDING
TO ST. THOMAS AQUINAS

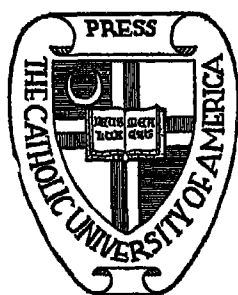
A STUDY IN SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY

A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE SCHOOL OF PHILOSOPHY
OF THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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INTRODUCTION

"We must choose," writes Berdyaev. "Liberty as a formula as now understood is discredited; it is imperative that we go on to its substance, to true liberty."¹ This is the primary objective of the dissertation: to investigate the nature and essential properties as well as conditions of true, substantial liberty as distinguished from formula. The modern world has had its fill of axioms, clichés, slogans, formulae, experimentation relative to human liberty. While believing it to be sacred, the world has no way of proving and defending the sacred character of liberty. While fanatically believing in the necessity of freedom, the modern mind has demonstrated its helplessness in the face of the anti-human Communist menace and its inability to support its belief that man should be and deserves to be free, and why he should be free. Illustrative of this general helplessness is the comment with which Stanford University inaugurated a course in mediaeval authors: "It is to be hoped that a study of mediaeval authors such as St. Thomas Aquinas will make the student a bit more hesitant voluntarily to give up his inalienable rights guaranteed to him by the Constitution. . . ." ² Americans have carelessly forgotten that while our Constitution was originally conceived on the philosophical premises of mediaeval authors it cannot be rationally defended without those selfsame philosophical foundations. They have the creed but no longer the rational grounds for it since they have repudiated the philosophical premises of mediaeval authors.

The following work comprises a modest attempt to trace these philosophical foundations which give meaning, vitality, substance and necessity to the American concept of liberty which derives from the Christian tradition of the high excellence of man and the supreme value in nature, the human person. "Whatever the world thinks, he who hath not much meditated upon God, the human mind and the *summum bonum* may possibly make a thriv-

¹ *The End of Our Time*, Sheed and Ward, New York, 1933, p. 89.

² Quoted in the *New York Times*, for Sunday, June 8, 1939, p. 10.

ing earthworm but will most indubitably make a sorry patriot or a sorry statesman." ³ Unless human liberty is forged indissolubly with the absolute values of God, the human mind, or the immortal soul, and the *summum bonum*, it easily degenerates to either of two extremes: into an accidental manifestation of human experience which, therefore, one can dispense with; or into an absolute in itself and for itself, in which case human dignity is dispensable and true human destiny frustrated. In the former instance liberty serves the cause of the evil of Communism; in the latter, the evil of Individualism.

To realize the purpose of this investigation recourse is taken to the philosophy of St. Thomas. The question of human liberty was not so vital in his day as to merit a formal and distinct *ex professo* treatise. The noble dignity of man and the high excellence and purpose of the human person were not questioned in his time and place. In order to effect a synthesis of his philosophy of human liberty it was necessary to make an extensive examination of his works in order to cull all the essential pertinent passages relative to his speculations on the spiritual and moral absolute values. These values alone can give immutable substance and meaning to liberty and preserve it from the hazardous fate of formula. The dissertation is, consequently, concerned with all those philosophical ideas of St. Thomas which, because of their own immutable and necessary value and meaning, give to liberty true value and import without which it is lifeless, indefensible and purposeless.

Much had to be left undone on account of pressing circumstances. Far from being complete and exhaustive, this work merely furnishes indications of the wealth and variety of thought that can be garnered from the philosophy of St. Thomas on the vital problem of human liberty. Thus, as one example, each article of the Bill of Rights in the American Constitution can find solid support in his philosophy and can be linked irrevocably with the absolute values of Christian civilization without which the things we hold dear are but hollow shells and platitudes.

³ Geo. Berkeley, "Siris," 350, *The Works of Geo. Berkeley*, vol. II, London: Thomas Tegg, 1843, p. 413.

To the Rev. Dr. Ignatius Smith, O.P., under whose direction this dissertation was written the author is deeply grateful not only for the unstinted aid and guidance so fraternally given but also for many other kindnesses. He is also indebted to the Rev. Dr. Charles Hart, Rev. Dr. William J. McDonald and also to Rev. Dr. Joseph B. McAllister for their reading of the manuscript and many helpful suggestions.

CHAPTER I

METAPHYSICAL BASIS OF HUMAN LIBERTY

The problem of human liberty is a problem of reality. Whatever the definition one gives to human freedom, whatever the speculation as to its nature, content and extent, one thing must be decided at the outset, whether in discussing human liberty one is discussing reality or a chimera. If the latter, there is no need of discussion. If we are concerned with reality, the problem of human liberty is insoluble without due and necessary recourse to the most fundamental realities, to the very source of reality. A thorough investigation of human freedom must reach to its most fundamental principles for human liberty is a reality.

Wherever reality exists, metaphysics rules; for metaphysics treats of reality and the fundamental principles of reality. The problem of human liberties has no solution and no intelligibility unless considered in its relationship to the metaphysical bedrock upon which all realities, especially the vital realities of basic human freedoms, rest. In a word, human liberties are either based on the ultimate realities, and then they are eventually rooted in metaphysics; or they have no connection with ultimate realities, and then it is useless to discuss them because, being so evanescent, they have no reason for existence.

Moreover it is not enough to start a discussion of basic human freedoms from the notion of truth; for there is no truth unless there is first being. The idea of being is implied and presupposed in the idea of truth which, really, is nothing more than the relation of being to an intellect. So it is from the most fundamental concept of all concepts that an investigation of human liberties must be launched. Once the concept of human freedom is anchored in the very concept of reality, the process of development becomes natural and gathers momentum and comprehension from one basic reality to another until the point of universal application in daily experience is reached.

The idea of being is the "life-giving" idea of Thomism.¹ The very idea of being presents reality as united in one single, all-embracing comprehension. From *Being by essence* proceed all other beings, all other reality. In the ontological order it is necessary to start from the most perfect Being to explain everything that exists or can exist. In fact, there is no explanation for *anything* without such recourse. With this in view we posit the principle which will govern succeeding speculation on the nature of liberty: whatever is said about God and creatures is said according to the order which creatures bear to God, as to the principle and cause in which all the perfections of things pre-exist.²

The fact of becoming and change is evidence for gradations in perfections which, in turn, are evidence for gradations in being. The closer a definite form of being approaches the Pure Act, God, the more perfect it is. Hence it is, that this universe of being is characterized with the greatest difference and contrast at the dividing line between the corporeal and spiritual world. Yet there is an essential similarity—certain beings of both spheres are progressing towards self-perfection and others are in possession of self-perfection. One inescapable truth of the order of beings is the absolutely necessary dependence of all reality on the One, Absolute Being.³ And this is not less true of the reality that is human liberty. Everything that exists has being by virtue of its participation in Divine Being. In the divine wisdom that conceived the order of the universe exist the reasons of all beings. Absolute Being is thus the efficient, exemplary and final cause of beings. As to their origin, these owe all their being to the First Being; as to their constitutive nature and their entity, they are imitations of Being; as to their end, they strive for Being by a continuous and progressive process.⁴ Here we have the most fundamental principle for a philosophy of human liberty: human participation in the perfection of Being by virtue of an ontological participation in Divine Being.

¹ Olgiati F.-Zybura, J.: *The Key to the Study of St. Thomas*, Herder, St. Louis, 1929.

² S. T., I, q. 13, a. 5.

³ S. T. I, q. 4, a. 1; q. 13, a. 11; *De Ente et Essentia*, c. 6.

⁴ S. T. I, q. 104, a. 1; I, q. 105, a. 5.

The essence of being and its perfectibility consists in its ontological dependence upon Absolute Being or God, which is manifested in a likeness of every contingent being to the Absolute Being. The imitation of this likeness obtains in two ways: by the creature imitating the divine idea by realizing the potentialities of that idea; and, inasmuch as the similarity between contingent and Absolute Being is grounded on the origin of the contingent Being.⁵ This likeness of contingent beings to Absolute Being is not restricted to the reception of being itself, but includes all essential properties of being, namely, truth, goodness and unity.

As God diffuses goodness by communicating it to other beings, the creature expresses likeness by possessing a finite imitation of that goodness and by diffusing it in imitation of God. The creature imitates not only Divine communication of being, but also His communication of goodness.⁶ Now, two modes of goodness as participated in by creatures can be considered: the perfection of a creature that consists in its conservation, and the perfection that consists in its operation or movement.⁷ Every action and movement of a creature must be directed to Divine Goodness not merely by participation but also by active assimilation to Divine Likeness. All creatures have one common basis of participation in, and assimilation to, Divine Goodness, namely to conserve and perfect their own being through operation and communicate this perfected being to others.⁸ Things are therefore assimilated to God not only in being but also in operation.⁹

The most general and universal manifestation of operation is through movement.¹⁰ All movement comes from God; it is natural to all beings; it differs according to the specific perfection of each grade of being; and it is ultimately directed towards God.¹¹ This power of a creature to act is an imitation of the divine power to act. The first distinction of relative perfection that

⁵ *De Pot.* q. 3, a. 4, ad 9.

⁶ *C. G.*, I. c. 38; *Comp. Theologiae*, c. 103.

⁷ *Comp. Theol.* c. 109.

⁸ *Comp. Theol.* c. 103.

⁹ *De Pot.* q. 2, a. 1 c.

¹⁰ *Quodl.* I, a. 8, ad. 3.

¹¹ *Quodl.* I, a. 8, ad. 3; *De Pot.* q. 2, a. 1 c.

obtains among beings as regards movement is based on the power of a being in self-movement because this is a more perfect imitation of divine movement. The more actuality is possessed, and the less potency, the greater is the participation in divine movement.¹² From this it is evident that movement of a being is conditioned by its essence. The movement proceeds from God and realizes the potency of the receiving nature and, as a perfection, is limited by the potency of the receiving subject. That activity is effective only within the bounds of that essence. This already gives one a pre-view of the nature of human liberty: that it is limited by the very nature of its subject. The creature continues the movement received from God under two qualifications: that of its own nature;¹³ and that of the final term, since there is no movement without a goal from which it receives its species.¹⁴

From movement, which is the most universal manifestation of operation, we arrive at the notion of causality, a more specific operation. There are beings which are destined to receive movement but never to transmit it. There are other beings which not only receive movement but are destined to transmit it to others. For this reason movement is less a perfection than causality.¹⁵ All beings have this in common that by means of their movements and operations they tend towards their ultimate perfection, which consists in their assimilation to Divine Goodness by conserving their Being and communicating it.¹⁶ They differ in the mode of communication which is determined by the essence of a being.¹⁷ The ultimate perfection of any thing consists in the attainment of its ultimate end; wherefore, it belongs to Divine Goodness to conduct things to their end, just as it produced them.

"In the coming forth of creatures from this first principle there is a sort of circling back inasmuch as all things return as to their end to that from which in the beginning as from a principle they emanated."¹⁸

¹² *Comp. Theol.* c. 74.

¹³ 2d. 25, a. 1, ad. 3.

¹⁴ *S. T. I.*, q. 23, a. 1, ad. 3.

¹⁵ *S. T. I.*, q. 18, a. 1 c.; a. 3, ad. 1; q. 53, a. 1, ad. 2.

¹⁶ *S. T. I.*, q. 63, a. 3.

¹⁷ *S. T. I.*, q. 89, a. 1 c.

¹⁸ 1 d. 14, q. 2, a. 2; *S. T. I.*, q. 103, a. 1 c.

The ultimate reason for any causality lies in the creature's imitation of God. The assimilation of creature to God consists principally in this that the creature fulfill that of itself which is in the divine Intelligence and Will. It is in this manner that God is the cause of every creature inasmuch as He understands and wills every creature to be.¹⁹ That however possesses greater perfection which is not only good but is the *cause* of the good of others.²⁰ Thus the causality of creatures not only prompts knowledge of God but is itself intelligible only in the light of Divine Causality.²¹ Causality is communicated to creatures together with being wherefore God is the ultimate cause of both.²² God created the universe and continues that creation directly or by secondary causality. To be a cause, then, is to participate in a finite manner in the infinite productive power of creation.²³ To participate in causality then, means to diffuse good by means of action.²⁴ What then should be said about attempts to frustrate this causal efficiency, this power to communicate goodness? It is undoubtedly wrong to refuse this power to diffuse good; it is no less wrong to impede this efficiency because a frustration of the causality of creatures is a frustration of the goodness of God. A universe in which causality is frustrated from obtaining its full effect would be unworthy of Divine Goodness.²⁵ This is especially true of the causality of free agents. Unnecessarily to curb the efficient causality of free agents is, ultimately, to curb divine causality and to disrupt the likeness to the Divine which is especially expressed in participated causality.²⁶ The things God created participate in being and operation and this constitutes their inalienable perfection. To derogate from this

¹⁹ *De Pot.* q. 3, a. 16, ad. 5.

²⁰ *S. T.* I, q. 103, a. 6.

²¹ *4 d.* 24, q. 1, a. 1 c.

²² *S. T.* I, q. 22, a. 3; q. 45, a. 7 c.

²³ *C. G.* III, c. 70; *De Ver.* q. 11, a. 1 c.: "Prima causa ex eminentia bonitatis suae rebus aliis confert non solum quod sint sed etiam quod causae sint."

²⁴ *S. T.* I, q. 103, a. 6 c.

²⁵ *C. G.*, III, c. 69.

²⁶ *C. G.*, III, c. 69; I, q. 22, a. 3.

creatural perfection is, ultimately, to derogate from God's divine power.²⁷

The malice and derogation to Divine power is increased in proportion to the degree of perfection possessed by the creature. Such derogation from secondary causality can be twofold: as it originates in Divine causality and as it returns to it. The added malice consists in disrupting the circulatory sweep of being and operation which originate in God and should end in Him.²⁸ Moreover, inasmuch as both Divine and creatural causality enhance our knowledge of God, interference with secondary causality is tantamount to interference with knowledge concerning God in which event ignorance and error are favored to truth and knowledge. Finally, since the perfection of beings consists in their likeness to God, and it is by operation that they enhance that likeness, to curb their causality is to rob them of perfection rightfully theirs, i.e. by right of the laws of being and operation.

SPECIFIC HUMAN CAUSALITY—FREE HUMAN ACTIVITY

Since operation follows the perfection of being, *agere sequitur esse*, creatural agents differ as regards their nature and as regards their active power.²⁹ It is due to its nature that an agent is either natural or voluntary.³⁰ Whether natural or voluntary, every agent tends to divine likeness. Now, among the creatures of the universe the rational creature tends towards divine likeness in a singular manner which sets it apart from all other creatures. The being of non-rational creatures is confined by matter and hence, it is finite actually and potentially. Rational creatures, on the other hand, are capable of infinity, either in act or in potency by virtue of the intellect which can contain within itself the intelligibles. These intelligibles are infinite; and the relation of the intellect to these intelligibles is that of potency to act.³¹ The perfection of the rational creature is therefore enhanced; for it tends toward divine

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ 1 d. 14, q. 2, a. 2; *De Ver.* q. 22, a. 2 c.

²⁹ *S. T.* I-II, q. 33, a. 4 c.

³⁰ *S. T.* I, q. 19, a. 4 c; q. 41, a. 2; q. 47, a. 1, ad 1; I-II, q. 10, a. 1, ad. 1.

³¹ *Comp. Theol.* c. 103.

likeness not merely by possessing being, conserving it and communicating itself, but in addition, it can come to an actual possession of that to which it is, by nature, in potency.³² That potentiality confers upon the intellect the perfection of the infinite which is attainable by the actualization of the intelligibles. It is in this way that the operation of intellectual creatures is capable of the greatest assimilation to God.

Man then, inasmuch as he is able to act and does act, produces effects flowing from the very source of his being.³³ He produces effects which really contain the cause, i.e. himself, the imprint of his personality. That the efficacy and finality of his personal activity ought not be unduly restricted follows from the basic laws of being. That he acts and produces is due to his being which he participates from Divine Being, and to the likeness which he is destined to realize. Only that restriction of his activity is legitimate which proceeds from God and is in accordance with the demands of the law of assimilation to the Divine. The activity of each and every man is his own proper activity because it proceeds from being that is his own proper being. Activity flowing from being is an essential property of that being and, therefore, is proper to the individual being. But the order of causes determines the order of effects, which is the same as saying that such and such a cause will produce such and such an effect. The order of causes begins with the First Cause, God; then follows intelligences and, in the third place, the soul, so that the first effect, which is that of being (*esse*), is rightly attributed to the First Cause; the second, which is understanding, is duly attributed to intelligence; and thirdly, the soul, which not only moves, which is animal activity, but also understands, which is intellectual activity, and also confers, which is divine activity.³⁴

Speaking of non-rational nature, St. Thomas frequently observes that it is an instrument in the hands of God.³⁵ When man is in question this "instrumental" view of nature is renounced. A rational being is endowed with a principle of activity which bears

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *De Ver.* q. 11, a. 1 c.

³⁴ *De Ver.* q. 5, a. 9, ad 7.

³⁵ *S. T.* I-II, q. 1, a. 2 c.

the divine likeness more faithfully than non-rational nature. God respects that principle of activity because He respects His likeness.⁸⁶ This is not to say that He does not move the rational creature by sustaining and supplying the virtue of its activity but, whereas He treats non-rational nature as an instrument, rational natures can become collaborators. Neglecting or rejecting this co-operation with God, the rational creature "derationalizes" himself, instrumentalizes himself. The relatively more perfect participation of the rational creature in the divine likeness cannot be stagnant because the First Cause is not static; it cannot be recessive or remiss for the same reason. Since it cannot be such by its own choice without detracting from Divine glory, it cannot be such by the interference of any external agent not even that of a self-esteemed "superior" rational creature.

The nature of a corporeal substance is determined to the singular and particular; and therefore, it cannot acquire additional natural perfection without the self-destruction of its nature. On the other hand, a spiritual nature is indetermined in its being wherefore it is capable of all things, after a fashion.⁸⁷ This is also peculiar to rational nature that it not only is capable of specific causality and activity proper to itself, which is above natural agents, but it can also exercise the powers of natural agents. It is capable of both voluntary and natural activity. Man can exercise the causality of a physical body because he is such a body; he can act as a living and organized body, for he is that too; and finally, the activity of rational nature because he is intelligent. But he differs specifically from the rest of nature by his rationality which is the principle of the only causality which is specifically human and properly his. This specific difference of human activity manifests itself in three essentials; man determines an end for himself; he is not determined to one effect as is the natural agent, and, his action is not necessarily proportioned to his nature as with the natural agent.⁸⁸ All rational causality is characterized by the presence in the mind of the agent of a preconceived notion of the effect to be

⁸⁶ S. T. I-II, q. 6, a. 1, ad. 3.

⁸⁷ *De Ver.* q. 24, a. 10, ad. 2.

⁸⁸ S. T. I, q. 19, a. 4 c; q. 41, a. 1 c; a. 2 c; q. 47, a. 1, ad. 1; C. G. III, c. 112 in medio.

produced.³⁹ Our actions and their effects must be within us before they are in themselves what they are meant to be. Our effects thus participate in our being. What man does and produces is *his* since the productive virtue and activity flows from his being and the effects are present in him as in a cause and thus his being, in a way, exists in those effects.⁴⁰

“Whatever belongs to a subject *per se* inheres necessarily in that subject as rationality in man and upward movement in fire. Now the actual production *per se* of any effect whatever belongs to the being in act for every agent acts inasmuch as it is in act. Therefore every being in act can make something actually exist.”⁴¹

Now liberty inheres necessarily in the subject not less than rationality for where there is rationality there is freedom. Thus it is that the proper effects of human activity are the fruits of freedom, and are based on the very law of being. It is by right of his very existence therefore, that man is empowered to conserve his unity, i.e. being; to maintain the true, i.e. being; to diffuse the good, i.e. being, in one word, himself. To say then, that man, as rational being, is at once act and cause is to assert not only that he *can* act as cause, but that he has a reason, a right and a duty also to act as cause, to communicate the good, maintain the true. By force of his ontological proximity to God, man not only has a definite tendency toward perfection, as do non-rational creatures, but he has control over that tendency so that he is not forced to tend, but can tend, or not, towards something desirable. He is not impelled to follow that tendency but has it within his power to determine it. He has this power because he is able to comprehend the end and the relation of end to end and of means to the end. His power of comprehension is not restricted to a corporeal organ of comprehension.⁴² He does not, however, possess the power of self-determination to the exclusion of the

³⁹ S. T. I, q. 15, a. 1 c.

⁴⁰ C. G. III, c. 69; S. T. I, q. 15, a. 1; *De Pot.* III, a. 7.

⁴¹ C. G. I, c. 16.

⁴² *De Ver.* q. 22, a. 4 c; *De Malo*, q. 3, a. 2.

First Cause. It simply means that the determination of his action is left to his discretion.⁴³

It was said that an actuality received is received according to the capacity or potency of the receiving subject. The potency determines at once the receptivity of the perfection of operation and the *kind* of operation. The degree of actuality and potency determines the nature or form and this, in turn, qualifies and conditions the operation of the nature in question.⁴⁴ It now remains to determine more precisely the nature of the being "man," for, in the light of the metaphysical principles thus far considered, it is this nature that marks the range, extent and quality of the specifically human operation. Operation as precisely human will be incomprehensible if the nature is not precisely understood. It will be erroneous if human nature is misconceived. That doctrine of human liberties, therefore, will be false which is based on a distorted and false notion of human nature, for it is this nature which is the repository of that divine causality participated by the specific kind of being, man.

The essence of human nature consists in this that man is an organic composite of matter and form, an organized living body and a rational soul.⁴⁵ Undue emphasis on one or the other essential constituents of human nature will utterly distort and falsify any philosophy of human liberty. In spite of his material, corruptible body, man remains immortal and incorruptible; in spite of his spiritual soul man remains a citizen of this world and much of his living is common to animals. The rational soul is the first principle of human life and the ruling principle. So all pervasive is this principle that it must rule, without reservation, man's psychological, religious, ethical, social, political and economic life. Man is not man by one soul and an animal by virtue of another. He is not the economic man, the social man, the political animal, the biological man, the Freudian man, etc. All principles, tendencies and impulses must be strictly subordinated to the primary principle of life, the rational soul. Man's reason must be sub-

⁴³ *De Pot.* q. 3, a. 7, ad. 13; *Comp. Theol.* c. 129.

⁴⁴ *C. G.* III, c. 97.

⁴⁵ *S. T.* I, q. 75, a. 4 c.

ject to God and everything else must be subject to human reason, the inferior elements of his nature subject to the superior.⁴⁶

The goal of any nature is perpetuity. Man, by reason of his nature, has been placed mid-way between the corruptible and the incorruptible creatures because his soul is entirely incorruptible while his body is naturally corruptible. The whole of nature⁴⁷ in the role of divine instrument, bears a different theological or intentional relationship to the 'incorruptible and another to the corruptible. That which is imperishable is principal in the intention of nature; that which is temporal and perishable is secondary in the intention of nature. The former exists *per se*, for its own good, the latter exists for the 'good of another. Since what is corruptible ceases to exist, therefore the primary intention of nature is to conserve the species, which is relatively permanent; but that which is imperishable remains permanent both as to species and as to individual. Wherefore, even the individuals of an incorruptible nature are of the principal intention of nature.⁴⁸ Now, nature is never deficient or wanting in things necessary; if it does not give man what he needs for life and existence, it furnishes him with the power wherewith he can acquire what he needs.⁴⁹ There are certain operations proper to man because his is a determined nature and a determined nature possesses determined operations suited to that nature.⁵⁰ That is proper to a nature which conforms to it by reason of its form. The form by which man is man, which constitutes him in his specific nature, is reason. What therefore, is proper to reason is proper to man.⁵¹ That is natural to man which is derived from his essential constitutive principles; and, in a secondary sense, that which is co-natural, i.e. which he has from birth.⁵² The essential note therefore, of what is natural and proper to man as man, is that it follow from the necessity of the principles constituting that nature

⁴⁶ C. G. III, c. 129.

⁴⁷ S. T. I-II, q. 1, a. 2 c; q. 6, a. 1, ad. 3; q. 26, a. 1 c.

⁴⁸ S. T., I, q. 98, a. 1 c.

⁴⁹ *De Virt.* q. un. a. 8, ad. 20.

⁵⁰ C. G. III, c. 129.

⁵¹ 2 d. 39, q. 2, a. 1. c.

⁵² S. T., III, q. 2, a. 12 c.

essentially. This however will not include any qualities that can be acquired by these essential principles, as for example, in the sense that we call certain acquired political virtues natural.⁵³

From this it is clear that whatever conforms directly and *per se* to the essential principles of human nature is natural and proper to man. Now the essentially constitutive principles of human nature are the rational soul and animality, with this latter subordinated and subject to the former. Certain things then, are so proper to human nature that to reduce them in any way is to do violence to that nature. On the other hand, what may be proper to certain individuals, or to a people, by reason of time, place or custom, is not necessarily natural and proper to man as man. Whatever, then, belongs to a thing by force of its own nature and not from an external cause cannot be diminished or lacking to that nature.⁵⁴ Thus, essential human liberty is natural and proper to all men as men; but democratic franchise is not necessarily natural and proper to men as men.

The sacred character of this human nature together with its essential properties is guaranteed by the very laws of being which prohibit interference, contradiction, deviation, or subversion by natural or voluntary forces, intrinsically or extrinsically. In the same way that God is the source-Being of all being, He is no less the source-nature of all natures, for, nature is nothing else but the activating principle of being in operation, being as exercising its inherent, ontological right to causality, especially a self-determined causality. The very existence of Divine Operation, essentially concurrent with natural human operation ought to be guarantee enough to warrant and justify the unhampered exercise of the inherent tendency of human nature. This applies to the natural tendency not only as to its origin but also as to its term; for what good is a tendency if it cannot terminate? At its basis, any nature, especially human nature, is only the imprint of the Divine art upon reality whereby all things are moved or guided, as the case may be, to an end necessarily determined by God because this end

⁵³ *De Ver.* 2.24, a. 7, ad. 10.

⁵⁴ *C. G.* II, c. 15 (*secundo*).

can be nothing else but God.⁵⁵ Art is but the right reason of things to be made and is always directed to good. This applies in a super-eminent degree to divine art.⁵⁶ Whatever is contrary to the nature of the artifact is contrary to the nature of art,⁵⁷ i.e. contrary to right reason. Human nature is a divine artifact, made according to divine plan, and made to develop within itself what is in it of the divine plan. Hence opposition to what belongs to human nature is opposition to the Divine Reason. It is in this way that Communism and Individualism are opposed to human nature and therefore, to Divine Reason.

CONCEPT OF PERSONALITY EVALUATED

To define man as a "rational animal" is to define him strictly; to describe him as a being endowed with an immortal soul, intellect and will is adequate. The essential elements are given. But what is not given is the great import and intense connotation of that nature. Rational nature is so specially eminent and of such sublime excellence that another concept is required to bring out its perfection in full. Modern cynicism as exemplified in liberalistic and totalitarian philosophy has so distorted the nature we call human, the being we call man, that his true dignity has been marred, scarred and obscured by making him a gilded idol or a robot. The concept that brings that much philosophically abused nature in its true light is that which Gilson called the exclusively Christian discovery, the concept of person. It is this metaphysical determination of being that brings divine likeness to its truest and most excellent representation in creatures. This concept reveals the metaphysics of being but no less the metaphysics of operation for, it is person in operation, personal human activity which is most truly representative of divine likeness and serves as the indestructible foundation and sacrosanct vessel of human liberties. Man is being because God is Supreme Being; man is responsible cause because God is First Cause; man is one, true, good and communicative of good because God is One, Truth, Goodness and

⁵⁵ *In Phys.* II, lec. 14: "natura nihil aliud est quam ratio cujusdam artis, scilicet divinae, indita rebus qua ipsae res moventur ad finem determinatum."

⁵⁶ *S. T. I*, q. 22, a. 2 c; *I-II*, q. 57, a. 3; a. 4; a. 3, ad. 1.

⁵⁷ *S. T. I-II*, q. 71, a. 2, ad. 4.

Communicative of all good; man is rational because God is intelligence; man is person, the best there is in nature, because God is supereminently Person; man is free and for himself because God is Freedom. Hence the metaphysical basis for the Christian contention that a sin against a neighbor is a sin against God; that no one is our brother unless God is our Father; that to respect freedom of others is to respect the divine likeness.

An essence may be common to many, but personality is attributable only to an individual, a complete individual substance of a rational nature.⁵⁸ A person is a certain nature with a certain mode of existence. It is the most excellent of all natures. It is an intellectual nature with the added significance that it exists for its own sake, *per se*.⁵⁹ Every human person is first and last an individual; but he is much more than an individual because he possesses a peculiar dignity of his own.⁶⁰ That dignity consists specifically in this that man is naturally free and exists for his own good.⁶¹ Dignity denotes the good of something which exists for its own sake; utility, again, exists for the good of something else.⁶² An instrument is not sought for its own sake, rather, it is to be used by a principal agent.⁶³ Man is his own principal agent, and self-determination is an essential property of a principal agent. Self-determination and instrumentality are mutually exclusive notions. These are the reasons which compelled St. Thomas to designate person as that which is the most perfect in all of nature.⁶⁴

In their concrete subsistences many kinds of substances are individuals but, of these, certain individuals are eminently distinguished from others by their autonomy, by their power of self-determination.⁶⁵ Inorganic bodies are entirely subject to

⁵⁸ *S. T. I*, q. 29, a. 1; a. 3; a. 5, ad. 2; ad. 4.

⁵⁹ *De Pot.* q. 9, a. 4 c; q. 3, a. 3.

⁶⁰ *S. T. I*, q. 23, a. 1 (in fine) "nomen personae significat substantiam particularem prout subijcitur proprietati quae sonat dignitatem."

⁶¹ *S. T. II-II*, q. 64, a. 2, ad. 3: "dignitas humana prout scilicet homo est naturaliter liber et propter se ipsum existens."

⁶² 3 d. 35, q. 1, a. 4 (sol. 1).

⁶³ *C. G. III*, c. 112.

⁶⁴ *S. T. I*, q. 29, a. 1; a. 3 c; ad. 2; a. 4 c.

⁶⁵ 4. d. 15, q. 4, a. 1.

stable laws of nature; plants and animals are subject to physical and biological laws. The case of man is altogether different. By his power of reason he is capable of apprehending a multiplicity and diversity of objects. His possibility of choice has a wide range of application.⁶⁶ Thus a man is an individual who is master of his acts. Others are more acted upon than acting; he alone acts in the proper sense of the term.⁶⁷ In this way the essence of personality is identified with the essence of liberty. The human soul, the substantial root of personality, becomes the primary intention of nature which is now more concerned with the individual person than with the species.⁶⁸ That which constitutes the primary intention of nature cannot become the instrument of any other agent or of another man. The individual person himself constitutes an end and can never be used as an instrument or a means. Inasmuch, however, as God creates souls the principal intention of nature becomes God's intention.⁶⁹

The human person, rooted in the direct activity of God, incorruptible by reason of the incorruptibility of the human soul, inherently possesses responsible rational activity whereby he will decide his own future destiny. Such free rational activity which participates in Divine activity and is essentially dependent upon it is endowed with a liberty that is a participation of divine liberty.⁷⁰ Freedom and rights must always remain vain words to those who do not habitually see man in this light—an end not a means. Personality removes him from the world of means and instruments to be used by other men, or by a collectivity. The difference between end and means, between principal agent and principal agent, is the difference between freedom and slavery. Only the rational creature is naturally free; all inferior creatures are naturally slave.⁷¹ Only the rational creature exists for his own good; everything else in the universe exists for the good of

⁶⁶ *De Ver.* q. 24, a. 7 c.

⁶⁷ *C. G.* III, c. 113.

⁶⁸ *C. G.* III, c. 112.

⁶⁹ *S. T.* I, q. 98, a. 1 c.

⁷⁰ Joannes a S. Thoma, vol. III, p. 400.

⁷¹ *C. G.* III, c. 112.

rational nature.⁷² A concept of personality, however, which is not grounded on the metaphysical truth that human personality is a participation in Divine Person⁷³ by no means can serve as a basis for inalienable human liberty. Only a person can rise to untold heights because only a person is in a position high enough to even begin the process of perfection. He alone is properly equipped with reason to know in what his perfection consists and to strive for it by means of his rational will.

Since the process of personal perfection consists in an operation that completes, as much as possible, one's likeness to the Divine, human liberty assumes the character of the sacred when the person has control over that process. Personality can never remain content with its initial excellence but must make progress by increasing knowledge and acquiring moral habits. When the process of development ceases in animals no disastrous effects follow. When the process of personal self-perfection ceases the effects are calamitous; for, where there is no progress there is recession and corruption. Such recession takes place when complete sovereignty of reason over animal nature is relaxed or perverted by the ascendancy of animal appetite. With man it is no longer so much a question of acting against his nature as against his personality.⁷⁴ And if this is true of the person in relation to himself, it is no less true of the person in relation to other persons. There can be no perfection of one personality at the expense of another personality. So much the more is this true of the relations between person and the moral personality of the group. The relationship of person to person must be guided by the relationship of self-perfection of one person to the self-perfection of another, or group of persons. The denial of the soul marks the beginning of the denial of the sacredness inherent in human personality and this, in turn, marks the beginning of all tyranny and slavery. There is no reason whatever why one animal should respect the perfection of another since the animal's perfection consists precisely in serving another. But there is all the

⁷² *Ibid.*; also *De Pot.* q. 3, a. 4 (sed contra).

⁷³ *De Ver.* q. 5, a. 1, ad. 7.

⁷⁴ *C. G.* III, c. 21; c. 97.

reason in the world why one person ought to respect the self-perfection of another precisely because it is perfection of *self*. If one animal is devoured by another the victim has served its perfection especially if it has served the purpose of a person. Whereas, if one person is forced to serve the utility of another he is reduced to the role of a means for the perfection of the other and thus is reduced to the role of the animal. This is equal to a loss of intrinsic excellence,⁷⁵ to a loss of dignity which is absolute and pertains to essence.⁷⁶ It is thus contrary to the very law of being to reduce a self-determining agent such as person to the role of utility since an instrument is the mark of slavery. And because man exercises his autonomy as a composite, through soul and body, the body must enjoy a certain measure of physical freedom according to the exigencies of personality.

MAN THE IMAGE OF GOD

The knowledge of being does not progress by means of extensive investigation but, rather by means of intensive penetration. The infinite power, wisdom and goodness of the Creator are manifested in the production of every creature, even of the least. The very existence of a creature offers sufficient evidence of the representation it bears to Divine being and goodness.⁷⁷ While in a broad sense, every creature can be considered an image unto God to the extent that it is a representation of an idea in the divine mind⁷⁸ strictly speaking, however, no irrational creature is properly an image of God.⁷⁹ To be a true image the creature must attain the ultimate genus of perfection which is possible to it. The essentials require that a creature exist, live and *understand*. This excludes the inanimates, which exist only; and the brutes which only exist and live.⁸⁰ A true image must represent the essential attributes of Divine Being.⁸¹ Image differs from the ves-

⁷⁵ 1 d 23, q. 1, a. 1.

⁷⁶ S. T. I, q. 42, a. 4, ad. 2; *De Pot.* q. 9, a. 1, ad. 3.

⁷⁷ S. T. I, q. 32, a. 1, ad. 2; q. 45, a. 5, ad. 3.

⁷⁸ 2 d. 16, a. 2, ad. 2.

⁷⁹ S. T. I, q. 45, a. 7 c; q. 93, a. 2; *De Ver.* q. 10, a. 1, ad. 5.

⁸⁰ *De Ver.* q. 10, a. 1, ad. 5.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*; also S. T. I, q. 3, a. 1, ad. 2.

tigial representation of Divine likeness, in three essential respects: it represents cause in its formal nature;⁸² it follows upon an intellectual soul;⁸³ its essence is rooted in the intellectual part of human nature.⁸⁴ Moreover, the representation of Divine Likeness in the form of image comprises three bases, being (*esse*) of a nature; the knowledge and the power of operation.⁸⁵ Essentially therefore, it consists in the essence and powers of the soul inasmuch as through its essence divine unity and essence are represented.⁸⁶

To call man an image of God is not a flattering metaphor. It is a dignity that reaches to the very depths of being; it is a positive and real prerogative, no less real than the dignity of human personality. In fact, it completes the dignity of personality. The divine likeness of image is the imprint of the divine essence stamped by the act of creation upon the very essence of human nature. It is not a mere accidental character supervening human nature as a frill. It is human nature essentially constituted but conceived as carrying out a likeness of being to Divine Being. It is therefore a permanent and indelible character. To be an image of God signifies that man, in a finite way, possesses what is God's.⁸⁷

The implications and consequences of this truth are incalculable. It is due to this superlative prerogative of human nature that the power of autonomy and the right of dominion are due to man, and therefore, special honor. Honor is due to one either by reason of himself, i.e. by reason of his inherent dignity, or by reason of another. Honor in the first signification is properly due to an agent enjoying free choice, namely, a person.⁸⁸ The divine image in man is therefore a positive and active quality which demands active accomplishment. In this sense it bespeaks an active assimilation of man to his Creator. Man is called upon to act out the role of divine image, to perfect and complete by progressive realization the divine likeness he has received together with being.

⁸² S. T. I, q. 45, a. 7; C. G. III, c. 25.

⁸³ 1 d. 3, q. 2, a. 3, ad. 1; ad. 2; *De Ver.* q. 2, a. 3, ad. 9.

⁸⁴ 2. d. 24, q. 2, ad. 3; 4 d. 4, q. 1, a. 3, qq. 3. c.

⁸⁵ S. T. II-II, q. 163, a. 2; *De Pot.* q. 9, a. 9 c. (*in fine*).

⁸⁶ *De Ver.* q. 27, a. 6, ad. 5.

⁸⁷ C. G. I, c. 29.

⁸⁸ S. T. II-II, q. 103, a. 4, ad. 3.

This assimilation of man to God consists in his fulfilling all that which concerns him in the divine intellect and will⁸⁹ much as an artifact fulfills the plan of mind and will of the human craftsman. Such active fulfillment of the intent of the Divine Mind requires first of all, the consciousness of being an image of God, and secondly, the completion of that image by operation. Since it is on the basis of self-mastery and responsible freedom that he resembles God the fulfillment of that image by means of personal operation requires the responsible use of liberty. For, wherein is the dignity of resembling God in the power of knowledge without the increase of knowledge? Wherein is the wisdom of resembling God in volition without exercising liberty for good and ever greater good? The more faithfully the exercise of liberty is in harmony with the demands of his nature, and therefore with image, the more does a man resemble his true self, and therefore, God.

That image of God which each man bears within himself calls for reverence.⁹⁰ But there first must be an appreciation in man himself of that reverence that is his due. On the strength of that image man is called to rule nature. How rule it? First by ruling himself, for he is still part animal. Next, by ruling nature according to the requirements demanded for the fulfillment of that image, by giving his own essence and nature the imprint of a mind made to the image and likeness of God. As God left His imprint upon His work, so man must leave his imprint upon his work. And this presupposes personal living, it presupposes operation. This imprint must be imparted on his own nature, on his own intellect and will by means of knowledge and virtue; on the nature, intellect and will of his fellow-man by means of social living; and finally, upon non-rational nature. This is the destiny of human liberty. In acting in accordance with the demands of the divine image within himself, man ascends progressively to a fulfillment of his essence and image called filiation.⁹¹ It is by reason of image thus conceived that man not only possesses liberty

⁸⁹ *De Pot.* q. 3, a. 16, ad. 5.

⁹⁰ *S. T.* III, q. 25, a. 3, ad. 3.

⁹¹ 3 d. 10, q. 2, a. 2, qq. 1 c.

naturally but also a guarantee for its expression. This liberty calls for respect on the part of its subject as well as on the part of those in any way related to the subject. Disrespect for, and detraction from, this inherent liberty is equal to disrespect for, and detraction from, the divine image represented in every man. The image is what it is, not by mere possession but, no less, by its activity. As the image invests liberty with a sacred character it also sanctifies its exercise by personal activity. To stifle that liberty is to stifle the essence and frustrate the fulfillment of image. Henceforth, injustice meted out to any man is measured not according to the stripped value of vague individuality but according to the highest excellence of all nature, the person as the likeness and image of God. Thus the notion of instrumentality with regard to man becomes utterly alien, in fact, violent. Violence is the negation of nature. How much greater is this negation when such an exalted nature as person in the image of Divine person is involved. Mere existence is not enough; life and action of animals is not enough; but being, existence, life and action of an image truly representing the Divine, only that is enough.

And, if this is true of the individual person, if this is the rule of conduct and the use of freedom that should guide man in relation to his own image, it is no less the same unswerving rule that must guide his conduct and the exercise of his freedom in relation to other possessors of that divine image. For nature does not admit of more or less, personality does not admit of higher and lower, image does not admit of greater or lesser. The essence that makes one man the image of God is substantially the same for all men. Each man is deserving of respect by reason of the image he bears no matter how insignificant may be his status according to accidental, humanly contrived standards. And what is due to each man in deference to his being is no less due to him in deference to his activity. To deny any man, or people, the unhampered exercise of his liberty commensurate to his dignity as image, is to deny him the right to a fuller realization of that image, and therefore, his destiny. If the image of the Divine is not there to guarantee human liberty then all protestations against slavery are vain and baseless. Deprive men of their divine imprint and there are no free men. They carry the indelible mark of

slavery on their brows. If they carry not the imprint of the divine they will carry the imprint of the next strongest and wisest man. If they are not free because God is absolutely free then they will not be made free by manifestoes or revolutions because without the divine image they are not fit to be free. If the dignity of man is to be found ultimately in man himself, as liberalistic individualism holds, or is to be found in the omnipotent state or omniscient elite, as Communism contends, then man's dignity is not a dignity at all but a man-made illusion, and his freedom is not freedom at all.

MAN'S PLACE IN THE UNIVERSE BY REASON OF HIS SPECIAL DIGNITY

As long as there is an universal order of beings there is, too, an universal order of activities. The order of the universe is considered here only to the extent that it throws light upon the relative position of the human person in the universal scheme of things and in so far as the implications of that order throw light upon the problem of human liberties.

Order is always spoken of in respect to principle.⁹² Wherever there is a principle, order must also exist because order signifies distinction and priority in relation to that principle.⁹³ Nothing is utterly deprived of order.⁹⁴ Inasmuch as God is the absolute first principle of all creatures and of the universe as a whole, a universal order begins to take outline as consisting of a twofold relationship: of creatures to God and of creature to creature.⁹⁵ The universe consists of a multiplicity and diversity of creatures as parts which bear a relation to each other and to their common principle. The degree of relationship they bear to the absolute common principle gives rise to a hierarchy of being according to greater or lesser perfection. Actually, the order of the universe comprises a series of distinct yet inter-related orders of beings, each of which characterizes a particular realm of being. The

⁹² S. T. I, q. 21, a. 3 c; q. 42, a. 3 c.

⁹³ S. T. II-II, q. 26, a. 1; a. 6 c (in fine).

⁹⁴ 2 d. 37, q. 1, a. 1; *In Phys.* VIII, 3.

⁹⁵ S. T. I, q. 21, a. 1, ad. 3; q. 47, a. 3; q. 103, a. 2, ad. 3.

ascending and descending scale of being represents the approximation of a being to Absolute Being, of a particular nature to the Divine Nature, of dignity to Infinite Perfection. Concretely the measure of a being's perfection will follow the measure of immateriality because the absolute First Principle is Pure Spirit.

Throughout this ascending and descending scale of beings the ascent (or descent) is progressive and gradual so that there is no complete and absolute division between the various realms of being, excepting the Absolute Being. The fringes of one realm of being touch upon those of the successive realm. The precise position occupied by man in this scheme of being marks the concurrence of two antipodean worlds, that of spirit and that of matter. In bridging the gap between the spirit world and the material world, man actually fulfills the role of pontiff, not merely in a figurative way but in a real sense. He combines within himself the angelic and animal worlds; and he does so not only in the realm of being but also in the realm of operation. As God is represented in the creatures of the total universe, man, in a finite way, represents in himself the universe after a fashion. For this reason he alone merits the title of *minor mundus*, a microcosm, a world in miniature.⁹⁰ God is pure Spirit. The universe, His handiwork, must mirror, at least partially, and not merely materially but formally, the Divine Essence, Intelligence and Will. This representation is effected not only *per se* and directly, but no less by means of beings, which, like God, have intelligence and will and freedom, albeit participated. All of nature is destined to give glory to God. However, not all of nature is destined to give *formal* glory, a glory that is recognized, acknowledged and conscious. The material objective praise of the universe is transformed in man by means of his intelligence and liberty into a formal praise, for, in each man is found in some degree a representation of all the grades of being, from the inorganic proceeding through the vegetative and animal until it reaches the realm of spirit. The law of metaphysical continuity operates in man. The very hierarchy of being which rules in the universe is found in

⁹⁰ S. T. I, q. 91, a. 1 c; *De Anima*, q. un. a. 1 c; *De Ver.* q. 24, a. 5; *De Pot.* q. 8, a. 4 c.

him in miniature. The order of the universe is reflected in the order that should prevail in him: the spirit over matter, the rational over animal, this over the vegetative, and vegetative over the inorganic. As in the universe, part is related to part by coordination and subordination so, in man, part is related to part by coordination and subordination. The multiplicity and diversity of creatures exist for the purpose of manifesting, each in its own way, a perfect likeness of God.⁹⁷ No one type of being fulfills this purpose as adequately as man. Diminutive he may be, but all-embracing too.

He is a microcosm not merely in being but also in operation. For by the power of intelligence he can, in a limited way, *become* all things. He can understand the universe, its order, its nature and its cause, and more important, he can *imitate* it. Hence, the likeness of that great universe is found in him not only passively but actively. Man can trace the semblance of an order that is similar to that reigning in the universe; he can guide himself by the order of the universe and even reproduce its likeness in himself and in relation to other creatures, superior to him or equal or inferior to him. Just as the universe constitutes an end for every creature so too is man an end with respect to all inferior creation.⁹⁸ Man thus reflects the universe in miniature according to the four types of causality, material, formal, efficient, and final.

Even man as such is not exempt from the law of coordination and subordination with a view to perfection of the universal order. There is, however, an essential difference in his subordination to that order and the subordination of the rest of creation. He is subordinated to the perfection of the universe in totality as an *essential* part of that order since there is in him an essential element that really belongs to a realm of being outside the material universe, i.e. his rational soul.⁹⁹ In the first part of his *Summa*, question 93, article 2, St. Thomas introduces as a third objection the opinion of those who insist that man is in no way exempt from

⁹⁷ C. G. II, c. 45.

⁹⁸ 2 d. 1, q. 3, *sed contra*.

⁹⁹ *De Pot.* q. 5, a. 10 c (*in fine*).

the order of the universe. The universe as a whole, they argue, is more perfect in goodness than man by sheer weight of numbers of the parts, each of which are good. The universe no less than man, they conclude, is made unto the image of God. St. Thomas gives a twofold answer to this objection. First, he insists that the universe is more perfect than man extensively and diffusively but by no means intensively; secondly, to determine the relative excellence of the various parts of the universe, one should not oppose part to the whole, but part to part. He concludes that only rational nature is created unto the image of God and the universe bears that image only in so far as the rational natures are numbered among its parts.¹⁰⁰ Thus every creature is ordained to its final end, God, mediately, by way of rational creatures.¹⁰¹ It is for this reason that all of corporeal nature exists for the good of man to the extent that the fulfillment of the end of corporeal nature depends on the fulfillment of man's end.¹⁰²

PARTICIPATION IN DIVINE PROVIDENCE A PREROGATIVE OF LIBERTY

Due to the peculiar position man enjoys in the universe as a whole, God has delegated to him a definite share in the government of the universe. Divine government of the universe, or providence is nothing else but the "fixed plan of things towards an end."¹⁰³ To rule by providence is to govern all beings in the sense that all beings are moved by Intelligence to their proper end.¹⁰⁴ While all creatures are absolutely subject to Divine Providence, not all are governed in an identical way. Different beings are subject to Divine Providence in different ways, each according to its nature.¹⁰⁵ Some beings are subject to Providence for their own welfare, others for the sake of other beings.¹⁰⁶ Whether a particular being is governed for itself or for another depends

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.* Ad. 3.

¹⁰¹ *Comp. Theol.* c. 124.

¹⁰² *Op. cit.*, c. 148.

¹⁰³ "Ratio ordinis rerum in finem" S. T. I, q. 22, a. 2; q. 23, a. 1 c; C. G. III, c. 75.

¹⁰⁴ C. G. III, c. 64.

¹⁰⁵ *In Job*, c. 8, lect. 4 (*princ.-et finis*).

¹⁰⁶ S. T. I, q. 103, a. 5, ad. 2.

on whether it is destined for immortality or not. Those destined for immortality are essential to the perfection of the universe; the corruptible, again, are accidentally related to the perfection of the universe.¹⁰⁷

Now, since the purpose of Divine Providence is to conduct things to their ultimate end, i.e. to God, the providence with respect to man is special in two ways: being master of his own acts man is not moved but moves himself to the last end; as far as attainment of that end is concerned, the rational creature alone can attain the ultimate end of the universe by means of its own operation.¹⁰⁸ To this end God has provided special aids to assist man in his activity for the final goal, and, definite reward for having realized the goal.¹⁰⁹ A peculiar characteristic of Divine Providence is that inferior creatures are governed by virtue of superior creatures.¹¹⁰ The very power of intelligence which makes man master of his own acts presupposes a providence of his own whereby he can provide for himself and for others.¹¹¹ Since he has the power to understand the nature and working of divine providence, man can imitate that providence for his own welfare and that of others.¹¹² In this way man participates in Divine Providence¹¹³ and this participation in divine government enhances his nobility.¹¹⁴ This noble prerogative entitles man to use inferior creatures as means for his own perfection, and at the same time precludes his subordination to the role of means or instrument. Rational creatures therefore exist for their own good, the rest of nature exists for man's good and finds fulfillment of its purpose in man.¹¹⁵

The truth of all this demonstrates the grievous errors in the world-view of liberalistic individualism and Communism. The

¹⁰⁷ *In Job*, c. 8, lect. 4.

¹⁰⁸ *Comp. Theol.* c. 143.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁰ *S. T. I*, q. 22, a. 3; q. 113, a. 1 c; q. 115, a. 3 c; 2. d. 1, q. 1, a. 3 c.

¹¹¹ *C. G. III*, c. 112.

¹¹² *Ibid.*; also c. 114.

¹¹³ *S. T. I-II*, q. 91, a. 3 c; ad. 3; *De Ver.* q. 5, a. 6 c; ad. 4.

¹¹⁴ *De Ver.* q. 5, a. 6 c; ad. 2.

¹¹⁵ *C. G. III*, c. 112.

former errs seriously in considering man the absolute end of the universe even to the extent of using fellowmen as instruments to achieve that end in spite of its protestations that the individual is absolutely sacred. Communism again, also sets up a different end for man,—the collectivity of the class to which it seeks to subordinate man. In one and the other world-view, man is *used* and abused. His role becomes that of a non-rational creature deprived of his natural liberty which has no meaning without its ordination to God. Since he is an end for part of the universe, and himself the principal agent in the fulfillment of the end of the universe through the exercise of his intelligence and liberty, to degrade him to the role of a mere instrument, as does Communism, or to exalt him foolishly as the very end of the universe, as does individualism, is to violate the inherent laws of universal order established by God. Initiative, self-control and responsibility characterize man as self-provider only because, like unto God, he is a person. It is uniquely a human prerogative to be a formal collaborator with God, so that by cooperating with God he helps himself to attain God and beatitude.¹¹⁸ God having made man what he is also provides the end, means and motive and power whereby man can realize the full potentialities of what he can be. Herewith human liberty assumes its true nature. Personal activity is nothing less than a conscious tendency towards the final end, God. He is the principle of that activity and has endowed it with autonomy in order that the end be attained freely and therefore responsibly and meritoriously. Since God does not inject Himself into this process of self-perfection by self-government, rather, He respects it, evidently it is His will that everyone respect it, even the agent himself. Herein lies the guarantee and sanction of human liberty for this is the destiny of that liberty. A denial or abuse of liberty is a denial and derogation of all the innately human prerogatives that mark the dignity of man: participated causality, personality, providence. God guarantees the activity, and the freedom of that activity by guaranteeing being itself. Now, according to the twofold order existing in the universe, of creature to creature, and of all creatures to God, therefore two

¹¹⁸ C. G. III, c. 113.

things are owing to God: that which is owed to creature and that which is owed directly to God. In one and the other case the debt is to God. And what is it that is due? To fulfill in things that which appertains to the wisdom and will of God and which manifests His goodness.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁷ S. T. I, q. 21, a. 1; ad. 3.

CHAPTER II

PSYCHOLOGICAL BASIS OF HUMAN LIBERTY

Everything exists for its own operation and this operation constitutes the end for each creature.¹ This end is not mere activity, rather, the most perfect activity.² The ultimate perfection of a creature consists in the attainment of its ultimate end.³ By means of a specific operation of his own, man tends towards the fulfillment of divine likeness i.e. his end, not only by conserving his being and communicating it, but, specifically, by actualizing in himself what he has by nature potentially, namely, the actualization of all the things knowable.⁴ Everything acts according to a mode of activity proper to it, which, in the case of man, is intellectual knowledge and activity in accordance with reason.⁵

No self-direction towards an end is possible without knowledge of the end.⁶ That man alone of all earthly creatures is capable of such knowledge of the end for which he strives is due to his nature. Knowledge of ends presupposes the power to dematerialize objects apprehended. But the power to dematerialize objects falling under apprehension presupposes an immaterial principle of knowledge, namely a spiritual soul.⁷ It is by virtue of this form that man transcends and excels all animals and has the power of understanding which distinguishes him essentially from the brute.⁸ It is by virtue of this single substantial form that man performs all functions, rational, sensitive and vegetative.⁹ There can be no

¹ *De Div. Nom.*, IV, 1.

² 4 d. 49, q. 3, a. 4, qq. 3, ad. 4.

³ *S. T.* I, q. 103, a. 1 c.

⁴ *Comp. Theol.* c. 103.

⁵ *S. T.* II-II, q. 179, a. 1 c.

⁶ *De Ver.* q. 22, a. 1 c.

⁷ *S. T.* I, q. 75, a. 1; a. 5.

⁸ *S. T.* I, q. 76, a. 1 c.

⁹ *S. T.* I, q. 77, a. 2 c; I, q. 78, a. 1 c; q. 81, a. 2 c.

rational soul without intellect and will; they are natural powers and follow by necessity upon the nature of the soul.¹⁰

It is by the exercise of liberty that man achieves his end; human liberty however, is utterly unintelligible without an understanding of its essential relationship to intellect and rational appetite, or will.

The term intellect is derived from the profound penetration into truth of which the mind is capable.¹¹ The intellectual principle has an operation all its own in which the body does not communicate.¹² Man is man precisely because he possesses reason. Therefore only those acts of his are properly human which proceed from the intellectual principle either by essence or by participation.¹³ The intellectual acts of man are most immanent and therefore the most excellent operations on earth.¹⁴ Intellectual operation does not pass over to external matter but remains in, and perfects, the agent. All infra-rational functions of man are strictly bound to the limitations of time and space, and restricted by the deficiencies of material organs and material objects. The human intellect can overreach the restrictions of matter¹⁵ and those of time and space¹⁶ and therefore it is infinite in its potentialities, it can become everything, after a fashion.¹⁷ It is by virtue of this power to understand the essences of things that man is able to actualize all the perfections he has been endowed with: personally efficacious causality, participation in Divine Providence and the fulfillment of his personal destiny in freedom. The power of understanding makes man naturally free.

Knowledge and will are rooted in the spiritual substance. This one spiritual substance bears a twofold essential relationship to things. According to the first of these relations external things are, after a fashion, present in the spiritual substance. The essence of things cannot be reached unless the things are dematerialized.

¹⁰ S. T. I-II, q. 110, a. 4, ad. 4; III, q. 18, a. 1 c; ad. 3.

¹¹ S. T. I-II, q. 108, a. 1, ad. 3; II-II, q. 8, a. 1 c.

¹² S. T. I, q. 75, a. 2 c.

¹³ 2 d. 25, q. 1, a. 3, ad. 3.

¹⁴ S. T. I-II, q. 31, a. 5.

¹⁵ S. T. I, q. 50, a. 2; q. 55, a. 1, ad. 2; q. 79, a. 3.

¹⁶ S. T. I, q. 107, a. 4 c.

¹⁷ *Comp. Theol.* c. 103; *De Ver.* q. 2, a. 2.

Secondly, because one thing is ordered to another, everything has an appetite toward another, either natural, animal or rational. Because a thing is present in a spiritual substance absolutely, devoid of any direct and immediate ties with matter, it is ordered to things as it causes them, it orders itself to things and therefore is free in its relations to them. The essence of liberty consists in the *free* inclination and ordination of the spiritual substance to things.¹⁸

Man is free because his will is not essentially dependent on matter; and the reason for this essential independence lies in the nature of the intellect which is able to conceive an end apart from matter and propose this end to the rational appetite. In the spiritual order the intellect is distinct from the will.¹⁹ The height of its immateriality is manifested in the ability of the intellect to know itself by reflecting upon itself and its own acts.²⁰ The greatest perfection of the intellect consists in its power to comprehend the whole order of the universe and all its causes.²¹ The proper and natural object of the intellect is being, universal being and everything connected with it, and this is equal to saying that the proper object of the intellect is universal truth. Its adequate immediate object is the nature or quiddity of things, their constituent principle, their unity and multiplicity and variety, their internal order and external relationship to other things, to man and to God, in a word, the ultimate causes of the world. Despite its multiple relation to such a variety and multiplicity of objects, the intellect is characterized essentially by simplicity and intrinsic unity.²²

THE WILL

By his power of cognition man can acquire a knowledge of things and in this way become, as it were, all things. Knowledge of a thing, however, leads to desire. What a person can know,

¹⁸ *De Ver.* q. 23, a. 1.

¹⁹ *S. T. I.*, q. 59, a. 2c.

²⁰ *S. T. I.*, q. 14, a. 2; q. 87, a. 1; q. 88, a. 2, ad. 3.

²¹ *De Ver.* q. 2, a. 2 (ut in eis describatur totus ordo universi et causarum ejus).

²² *De Ver.* q. 15, a. 1 c; *In XII Met. lec.* 11.

that he can desire and eventually, possess. Such an inclination follows the nature of a being so that there is a natural appetite, a sensitive appetite following upon sensible apprehension and intellectual appetite following upon intellectual apprehension.²³ Every appetite is the inclination of a being towards something that is like to itself and suitable to it.²⁴ The human soul tends towards its proper object by means of two appetitive powers, the sensitive and the rational or will.²⁵ The sensitive appetite is subject to the dictates of reason.²⁶ The rational appetite is a voluntary appetite inasmuch as it proceeds from an intrinsic self-determined principle and thus differs from the natural appetite, which proceeds from an extrinsic principle. The voluntary agent is therefore a free agent.²⁷

Now, just as the proper object of the intellect is not a particular but a universal reality, truth in general, so too the proper object of the will is good in general, good in its universal being. The appetite of a being follows the apprehension of the object. Since rational apprehension is inclined to good in general, the will, following that apprehension, desires the good in general.²⁸ Will is thus a reasoned desire, a desire of good as known by reason²⁹ inasmuch as it is something apprehended as pertaining to the good of one's own being.³⁰

Like the other appetitive faculties of the natural order, the will is directed by inner necessity to its ultimate end. It is moved by the ultimate end and the infinite universal good as necessarily as the intellect is moved by first principles. By the volitional appetite we desire not only that which pertains to the power of the will as such, but also whatever pertains to every other human power and human nature as a whole. Man therefore naturally desires not only the good of the will itself but anything that is good to

²³ S. T. I, q. 78, a. 1; a. 3; q. 79, a. 11.

²⁴ S. T. I, q. 59, a. 1; q. 80, a. 1.

²⁵ *De Ver.* q. 15, a. 3 c.

²⁶ S. T. I, q. 74, a. 3; q. 81, a. 3.

²⁷ 3 d. 27, q. 1, a. 2 c.

²⁸ S. T. I-II, q. 1, a. 1, ad. 3; q. 2, a. 7; a. 8; q. 8, a. 1; q. 9, a. 2.

²⁹ C. G. I, c. 91; *De Ver.* q. 22, a. 1.

³⁰ S. T. I-II, q. 28, a. 1.

his other powers such as knowledge of truth, existence and life.⁸¹ The will is necessarily inclined by nature towards universal good but not towards particular good. In relation to these it is free and undetermined.⁸² With respect to particular contingent good the will can act or not act, choose or not choose, choose or reject, in fact, will or not will. In every contingent good there is a measure of limitation and defect because it is finite by nature. Therefore the object apprehended under these limitations can be desired by the will under the aspect of good, or, rejected under the aspect of its limitations and deficiencies. This twofold aspect of a particular good is not characteristic of the perfect, universal good, i.e. beatitude. Ultimate happiness cannot be apprehended under any aspect of evil or defect precisely because it is perfect and excludes any defect. Hence, it is metaphysically impossible for a man to desire unhappiness or to desire not to be happy.⁸³ There can be no choice with regard to the ultimate end; but choice is possible with regard to the means that lead to this end.⁸⁴ This in no way weakens or nullifies freedom, rather, it is the precise reason why the will is free. Just as the necessary acceptance of the first principles of knowledge does not destroy the power and efficiency of understanding but serves as an anchor and guarantee of all understanding, so too, the conformity of the will to the last end does not destroy the efficacy of willing but actually is the principle that makes all willing possible and efficacious.⁸⁵ The nature of every thing and the origin of every movement are always to be found in an immutable first principle.⁸⁶ Thus, whatever serves as the fulfilment of the very needs of a being's own nature and constitutes its immutable possession, is necessarily the foundation and principle of all the rest that pertains to being, its properties and acts. The necessary inclination of the will towards good in general signifies nothing less than that the will exists as a will, and its conformity to good as such provides it with the

⁸¹ S. T. I-II, q. 10, a. 1 c; II-II, q. 34, a. 1 c.

⁸² S. T. I-II, q. 10, a. 1 c; ad. 3.

⁸³ S. T. I-II, q. 13, a. 6 c.

⁸⁴ S. T. I, q. 60, a. 1 c.

⁸⁵ S. T. I, q. 82, a. 1 c.

⁸⁶ S. T. I, q. 82, a. 1 c; C. G. III, c. 97.

very first principle of all its operations. Otherwise there would be no movement at all. The will could not ever begin to will if its operation were not necessitated from the start by a principle which spells the very conservation and perfection of the will itself.³⁷

The reason why the will is directed with such necessitous force and infallibility lies in its very nature. When the will is inclined towards an object in all its force, it is inclined necessarily because there is nothing that can detain or suspend such adduction. This inclination is of full force when there is total conformity between the object and the universality of the will's inclination. In such an event, the good proposed to the will is proposed in all its fullness, richness and universality so that nothing of the will's indifference remains. Such an inclination presupposes full deliberation; hence the will is not moved after the manner of an innate appetite extrinsically determined, actually it is intrinsically determined for the simple reason that the apprehension is intrinsic and total. Therefore the tendency of the will toward the universal good is natural not because it is innate but because it is necessary.³⁸ The reason why this or that particular good is desired is due to the necessary natural desire for happiness.

Thus the will, like the intellect, is a spiritual power. It is an immaterial faculty that does not subsist in matter. Nor is it circumscribed nor dependent upon matter for its essential operation.³⁹ Like the intellect, the will can reflect upon itself and its own acts. It alone is the sufficient principle for eliciting acts of the will, and it alone serves as a subject of those volitional acts. Since the proper object of the will, and the properties of this object, are immaterial, the principle which produces acts proportioned to that immaterial object must itself be immaterial. Now the intellect proposes an object to the will that has been dematerialized, divested of all material qualities and therefore universal.⁴⁰ All this demonstrates the gravity of the error of all those who con-

³⁷ S. T. I-II, q. 10, a. 1, ad. 1; De Ver. q. 22, a. 6.

³⁸ Joannes a S. Thoma, vol. III, pp. 400-1, *Cursus Philosophicus Thomisticus*, Marietti, Taurini, 1937.

³⁹ C. G. III, c. 85.

⁴⁰ S. T. I-II, q. 31, a. 1, ad. 2; I, q. 59, a. 1 c.

ceive human liberty as a property of a will which they conceive as a purely material faculty. Sacredness and dignity can hardly be characteristics of human liberty when it is based on such flimsy supports.

INVIOABILITY OF WILL AND INVIOABILITY OF LIBERTY

Invioability is that particular natural perfection of the human will which offers proof for the high excellence of the rational appetite and in virtue of which human liberty is guaranteed. It also throws light upon the practical external expression of that natural freedom, for, if it is so sacred in its very nature and principle, that the tendency of the will outwardly expressed must participate to a definite extent, in that sacredness and invioability. The fundamental opposition of the two concepts, voluntary and violence, already points to a natural incompatibility between an act proceeding from an intrinsic and undetermined principle and one proceeding from an external, compulsory principle. The terms are mutually exclusive, and such metaphysical impossibility precludes any physical or moral possibility.⁴¹ A voluntary, and therefore free, act is one that proceeds from an intrinsic principle with a knowledge of, and a direction to, an end.⁴² That which proceeds from the will as from its principle, and, in accordance with the natural inclination of the will, either in active or passive manner, proceeds in the light and under the impulse, of the agent, and under the power of self-direction.⁴³ Constraint means violence and whatever runs contrary to the natural inclination of a thing is violent.⁴⁴ The will resists the assault of violence with all its strength because the violent and the natural are mutually exclusive. It is inconceivable that one and the same subject should harbor both qualities.⁴⁵ As it is impossible for a thing to be natural and unnatural at one and the same time and from the

⁴¹ S. T. I-II, q. 6, a. 4 c.

⁴² S. T. I, q. 105, a. 4 c; I-II, q. 6, a. 1.

⁴³ S. T. I, q. 82, a. 1 c; I-II, q. 6, a. 1 c.

⁴⁴ *De Ver.* q. 24, a. 1, ad. 18.

⁴⁵ *In Metaph.* V, lect. 6.

same respect, so it is impossible that the human will be naturally inclined and yet inclined contrary to its nature.⁴⁶

So hallowed is this essential character of the human will, founded as it is on the innermost laws of being, that it is maintained even against Divine agency. Even God cannot constrain the human will without destroying its natural endowment of freedom.⁴⁷ Thus the will, alone of all faculties, possesses absolute interiority.⁴⁸ That which is innermost in nature is its finality and this is the will understood as the ultimate principle of operation in human nature. Because the will does not receive this finality from without, so much less can its own movement and activity be imposed upon from without. The will can suffer no violence intrinsically without ceasing to be what it is. This essential and thorough impregnability of the will as a faculty is participated by its acts. Since it is the nature of the will to be absolutely inviolable, according to the decree of the Author of nature Himself, this inviolable character would be unintelligible if it did not extend to the very acts that proceed from it according to the inclination of its nature. The end of a power is act and a power is perfect insofar as it is determinate of its act.⁴⁹ A power without acts is a power with privation and to this extent it is evil, because the nature of evil is privation. And if it is evil to have a power without act, it is more evil to have an act fall short of the perfection of the power. A cause should produce an effect like unto itself. Thus a power essentially free should produce a free act. To the extent that an act is robbed of its perfection of freedom to that extent is the power from which that act proceeds deprived of its perfection.⁵⁰ There would be little purpose to the inviolability of will if that inviolability can be flagrantly negated in its external expression. Constraint would leave a man in the possession of knowledge of a good and to a vain desire for it, and to disappointment in never attaining that which is needed for his own perfection.⁵¹

⁴⁶ *S. T. I*, q. 82, a. 3; *I-II*, q. 6, a. 4; a. 5.

⁴⁷ *De Ver.* q. 22, a. 8, *sed contra*.

⁴⁸ *De Ver.* q. 22, a. 12, *sed contra*, 2^o; 3 d. 27, q. 1, a. 2.

⁴⁹ *S. T. I-II*, q. 55, a. 1 c.

⁵⁰ *In IX Eth.*, lect. 11.

⁵¹ *C. G. III*, c. 113.

This perfection of immanence which characterizes the will and its operation is itself the principle and source of consequential properties which all add to the total perfection of human personality. For, the will is the dynamic force through whose operations human personality progresses in self-perfection and self-development. Man is master having dominion not only over distinctly human acts, but over the principles of those acts as well, i.e. the faculties. He is not less responsible for his habits than for his acts. Rational faculties are intrinsically undetermined.⁵² It belongs to the competence of the will to determine them to action. The will can apply any natural human power to its acts so that we understand because we will to understand; imagine because we will so, etc.⁵³ In this way the will is superior to the other human faculties of the soul, wherefore the maximum of liberty is found in the will for "that is free which is its own cause."⁵⁴ Consequently the will governs and directs the process of human self-perfection to the extent that it directs all powers of the soul to the good of the whole. It is thus a causal agent not only in respect to external things but also to the very intimate powers of the soul.⁵⁵ This influence of the will on the acts of all the other human powers, even the sensitive, which it must rule, stems from its essential and innate freedom.⁵⁶ As a result, no power is superior to it excepting God, although some created power may surpass it *simpliciter*, absolutely speaking.⁵⁷

Such are the fundamental antecedents of human liberty. The nobility and sacrosanct character of its principles redound to the nature of human liberty. This is further confirmed by the nature of merit. All merit is founded in the will.⁵⁸ But just as the excellence of human liberty can be measured from its essential power to merit, it can also be negatively measured by its power to demerit or degrade itself, by committing sin which reduces a

⁵² S. T. I-II, q. 51, a. 2 c.

⁵³ C. G. I, c. 72; 2 d. 25, q. 1, a. 2, ad. 4.

⁵⁴ *De Ver.* q. 22, a. 12 c.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ *De Ver.* q. 24, a. 5 c.

⁵⁷ *De Ver.* q. 22, a. 11 c (*in fine*); 2 d. 25, q. 1, a. 2, ad. 3.

⁵⁸ *De Ver.* q. 22, a. 13, *sed contra*; S. T. I, q. 95, a. 4 c.

naturally free human nature to the slavery of beasts⁵⁹ a power that belongs primarily to the will.⁶⁰ Yet, just as human degradation and self-enslavement finds its cause in a de-ordination of human liberty, so liberation from this degradation is possible only with the full cooperation of human liberty.⁶¹

While human liberty is inviolable intrinsically at its source, it is not infallible and immutable in its external actual exercise. The reason for this is that free human activity is not exclusively and purely spiritual. Free human activity evolves as the activity of the whole, complete man as constituted in concrete human nature. Such activity therefore, is constantly subjected to the ordinary vicissitudes and influences of human life such as the sensitive appetite, passions and emotions. Add to these the influences of fear and ignorance, and human liberty manifests itself often enough as a mixture of compulsion and fear. A strong will rules over passions and uses them for a life of reason, which is the only truly human life. It demands order and harmony between spirit and sensitive nature.⁶² The greater the mastery exercised by the will over passions and emotions, the greater is the freedom.

IGNORANCE AND LIBERTY

Human activity is free when it is voluntary. It is voluntary when it proceeds from an intrinsic principle with a knowledge of the end. A defect of knowledge will diminish the freedom of volitional activity. A defective knowledge of the end is termed "ignorance." Whether that ignorance is the result of self-deception or deception engineered by means of propaganda is non-consequential as far as human liberty is concerned. One and the other type of ignorance diminishes freedom. Knowledge is essential to liberty. No one can desire and embrace freely what he does not know. Freedom is for a purpose and misapprehension or lack of apprehension of that purpose is destructive to liberty

⁵⁹ *S. T.* II-II, q. 64, a. 2, ad. 2.

⁶⁰ *S. T.* I-II, q. 77, a. 6; q. 74, a. 3 c.

⁶¹ *De Ver.*, q. 24, a. 11 c.

⁶² *S. T.* I-II, q. 9, a. 2; q. 24, a. 1; q. 59, a. 1, ad. 2; q. 81, a. 3, ad. 1; q. 85, a. 3, ad. 3; III, q. 15, a. 2, ad. 2; *De Ver.* q. 24, a. 11 c.

first of all because it is inefficacious willing and secondly, because ignorance can be as enslaving as chains. Ignorance is thus reduced to a lack of knowledge of what is being chosen.⁶⁵ Every agent acts in a manner in which the end appears to it.

FEAR AND FREEDOM ⁶⁴

Under the influence of fear (external or internal), freedom comes closest to being alloyed with compulsion. Fear is not violence, it is an emotion which is aroused by the approximation and threat of evil and, consequently, it is psychological in its threat and origin. A judgment of the end or purpose formed under the influence of fear is severely hampered, disordered, and does not constitute a true and objective appraisal of the object to be willed. Under such circumstances both the act of judgment and the act of will lose their proper rational perfection. The primary motivating cause of such willing is an animal-principle and the act therefore does not possess its full measure of freedom. The fear of physical abuse, social discrimination, prolonged incarceration, the fear of artificially-motivated wants, such as ration cards prompted by political motives; in a word, the threat of any danger (if serious enough) undermines freedom because volition is influenced by the desire to escape danger and not by a desire for good as such, the proper object of the will.

RELATION OF INTELLECT TO WILL AS REGARDS HUMAN LIBERTY

It is by virtue of his power of cognition that man is able to determine an end for himself.⁶⁵ This is the basis for his freedom from determination to any particular end.⁶⁶ In the nature of human intellect is found the "*ratio*," the sum and substance of human liberty, because intellectual apprehension is least subject to the limitations of matter.⁶⁷ Man is free and master of his acts precisely because he does not act without a judgment, as is the case with inanimates; nor does this judgment proceed from a

⁶⁵ S. T. I-II, q. 6, a. 8 c.

⁶⁴ S. T. I-II, q. 6, a. 6.

⁶⁵ S. T. I, q. 19, a. 4 c.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*; q. 41, a. 1; a. 2.

⁶⁷ *De Ver.* q. 23, a. 1 c.

natural impulse, as is the case with brutes. Judgment proceeds from a properly human cognition because the intellect apprehends not only the end, but also its nature, and the means to that end, and the relation of one to the other. Man is therefore master of his inclinations and of his acts because he is master of his judgment. He is free in his acts because he possesses freedom of judgment.⁶⁸ In fact, where there can be no free judgment of reason there can be no liberty. To be free man must have mastery not only over that towards which he is striving, but also over that which prompts him to move, namely, his judgment.⁶⁹

Like all other creatures man is in need of guidance to the proper goal of his life. Unlike all other creatures however, he is able to exercise that guidance himself by conducting himself to his proper goal. Human autonomy indicates not that man is to be deprived of any direction whatsoever to the ultimate objective which is suited to his nature, but rather that in his case, direction is self-direction following upon intellectual cognition that is proper to his nature. The role of the human intellect, then, in the matter of human liberty, is that of a director and preceptor. Immediately following the recognition of the object or term of a natural inclination, as that which serves a natural want or need, the intellect evaluates the object as good and judges what is opposed to this as evil. When a man judges things to be done (*de agendis*), he can judge freely because he comprehends the nature of the end, the means to this end and the order of one to the other. He is thus, his own cause, the master of his act not less in judgment than in self-movement, so that to be free means to be free first of all in judgment.⁷⁰ The will does not act as it is but as it desires.⁷¹ And it desires as it knows.

THE PROPER SUBJECT OF HUMAN LIBERTY

We are called rational not merely on account of the power of reasoning, but because of the rational soul of which the will is a

⁶⁸ *Comp. Theol.* c. 76; 4 d. 9, q. 1, a. 4.

⁶⁹ Joannes a S. Thoma, *op. cit.*, vol. IV, p. 388, linea 33 sq.

⁷⁰ *De Ver.* q. 24, a. 1.

⁷¹ *S. T. I.* q. 41, a. 2 c.

power. We are said to be free only in so far as we are rational. If, however, rationality is derived from the power of reason, then this would signify that reason is the first origin of liberty but not the immediate principle of free choice.⁷² Three factors concur in human voluntary operation: knowledge, appetite and the operation itself. At times it would seem that the will does not always follow cognition. The will revolves around something particular (*operabili*), that which is to be accomplished, while again the intellect is concerned with something of a universal character, which sometimes is contrary to the inclination of appetite. However, a particular judgment about this particular objective can never be contrary to appetite. Since to judge regarding its own act belongs to reason by virtue of its power of self-reflection, and moreover, it alone perceives the relationship and order among things concerning which it judges, the whole root of liberty is in reason.⁷³

The exercise of liberty as such is an operation which by nature belongs to the will, because choice is a desire for something pre-conceived and it is the will which desires.⁷⁴ But there is no volition where there is no judgment hence the ultimate root, as cause, of liberty, is reason.⁷⁵ Good is the object of the will, but not good absolutely speaking, rather good as *understood* so that perverse choice follows upon perverse judgment.⁷⁶ When therefore judgment is deprived of all indifference and is restricted to the purely singular, the movement of the will which follows is not fully deliberate and therefore that much short of being free.⁷⁷ Error in choice cannot be attributed to the will but to erroneous judgment. It follows therefore, that the more perfect the intelligence the more perfect is the liberty, for liberty in itself is not greater or lesser, but in relation to the disposition of the subject, i.e. of its cause, reason.⁷⁸

⁷² *De Ver.* q. 24, a. 6, ad. 4.

⁷³ *De Ver.* q. 24, a. 2 c.

⁷⁴ *De Ver.* q. 22, a. 15 (*sed contra*), q. 24, a. 1; *S. T.* I, q. 83, a. 1; q. 5; *De Malo*, q. 6, art. un.

⁷⁵ *S. T.* I, q. 83, a. 1; I-II, q. 17, a. 1, ad. 2: ". . . radix libertatis sicut subiectum est voluntas, sed sicut causa est ratio."

⁷⁶ *C. G.* III, c. 85.

⁷⁷ Joannes a S. Thoma, *op. cit.*, III, p. 389.

⁷⁸ *S. T.* I, q. 59, a. 3, ad. 3; q. 62, a. 8, ad. 3.

The degree of emphasis placed on the root of liberty or its cause spells the difference between the "slave-will of Luther and the free-will of Catholic philosophers."⁷⁹ By unduly emphasizing action at the expense of reason one inevitably subscribes to a pernicious error of exaggerated voluntarism. The ability of the human race to spread over the entire earth and master its environment offers rich testimony to the exalted dignity and wonderful efficacy of free human activity.⁸⁰ But this hardly constitutes proof for the primacy of action over thought. For persistent and tenaciously determined pursuit of good is no less the characteristic of the animal. If one is actually seeking proof for the primacy of action over thought, action for action's sake (if that is the ideal), then it is most surely found in beings inferior to man. Where is this ideal of action better exemplified than in the blind and powerful activity of instinct? Every created nature is driven by appetite, but it is particularly the nature endowed with reason that is master of its appetite. Human appetite is free because it is reasoned. As long as reason holds sway over appetite the original source of liberty is always guaranteed.⁸⁰ Unless reason exercises its prerogative of director and preceptor in evaluating indefinite multiplicity and variety of goods for the will, goods which lose their quality of being good if they fail to lead to the Infinite Good, the will would never reach the ultimate perfection for which it is destined. At best, it would be a haphazard, capricious process, for only as it consistently pursues the Infinite Good can it rise above the limitations and the power to enslave that characterize particular goods. For the brute is naturally slave because it can be, and is, only satisfied by what the present and immediate has to offer, which is a negation of immortality.

The guiding principle of human liberty is truth, for otherwise it would find satisfaction and quiescence in any good with which it would be united or it would not find satisfaction unless all, each and every particular good, would be possessed and enjoyed. First, no human life span is equal to this task. Secondly the totality of

⁷⁹ Gilson, Etienne, *Spirit of Medieval Philosophy*, Trans. by A. H. Downes, New York: Scribner's Sons, 1936, p. 473.

⁸⁰ *De Ver.* q. 24, a. 10, ad. 10.

particular goods fall far short of satisfying the infinite capacity for human liberty. This failure to satisfy is not due to a defect of quantity but to a defect of quality.⁸¹ Excessive voluntarism is too often a disguise for selfishness; and what is selfishness if not the relentless, sheer willful pursuit of goods without the direction of reason? A truly intelligent person is seldom a selfish individual. Unless the intellect precedes the inclination of the will by presenting it with an evaluation of the good desired by pointing out the suitability of that good to the human person as a whole, and the relationship of the particular good to the Infinite Good, the particular circumstances attendant upon the good in question and the relative perfection of that good to the perfection of other goods; all exercise of liberty would be reduced to mechanical motion, and its direction would be haphazard and capricious. In fact such direction would hardly be self-direction, it would be the activity of the brute, "*magis agitur quam agit.*" For if reason is not present to guide the will as to the relative and proportionate value of the objects desired, any object, insofar as it is good would incline the will to action. Then, what should have been a free inclination, springing from an inner principle with a knowledge of the end, becomes instead a compelled inclination proceeding from an external principle, i.e. the external object.

Everything desires by force of its own nature to be perfectly what thus far it has been only imperfectly and potentially. Man cannot be what he desires unless he knows what it is that will perfect him. The direction of his rational desire must be guided by truth. His happiness consists not in mere pursuit and possession of the Good, but in knowing what he possesses and how he possesses it. Human intelligence however, can direct the course to be pursued towards perfection only when it is itself directed by truth. Without this knowledge of truth the will is lost in the maze of desires and of true and apparent and false goods. The essential relation existing between free volition and the end to which it tends must be discovered and maintained by the intellect. Without truth, human liberty has no fixed point outside itself; it is deprived of all anchorage with the result that vacilla-

⁸¹ S. T. I-II, q. 2; C. G. III, c. 25 to 36.

tion, fluctuation and willingness characterize human activity. Such activity becomes purely subjective and can never conform to what we are and what we ought to be by the inherent laws of our being. What we are has been determined by God when He conferred being upon us unto His own image and likeness; what we ought to strive to be has also been determined by God, namely, the fulfillment of that image and likeness. But being is not divided against itself. Truth and goodness are but two different aspects of one reality. So liberty must be good and it must be true or the subject of liberty, being, is violently divided. Liberty must be true and must be good not for its own sake but for the sake of the being in which it adheres and which it should help to perfection. Liberty serves the interests of truth only when ordered ultimately to the Absolute Truth, just as it serves the interests of good only when ordered to Absolute Goodness. Deviation from this true course of liberty is a false and perverse liberty. Such liberty is as alien and violent to human nature as a lie, hence there is no liberty except in truth.

In a certain sense the true is what is, but this "what is" cannot be the changing appearance of things but rather their norm and rule, i.e. the divine idea which they express, in which they participate and which they strive to imitate. The thing given in truth and our thought itself to which it is given, lie in the sphere of the contingent, the mutable and the temporal; whereas truth has its natural home on the plane of the necessary, universal, eternal and immutable. The human intellect is able to generate truth only because it participates in the Truth.⁸² We attain divine ideas latent in things through the agency of an intellect which is itself a participated likeness of the uncreated light in which these ideas dwell.⁸³ To concentrate the striving of the will upon the good in things to the dereliction of the truth in them is to derogate from their inherent entitative excellence for they are good only if at the same time they are true, according to the truth by representation of divine ideas. One who strives after good *because* it is good, and avoids evil *because* it is evil, is true master of himself,

⁸² S. T. I, q. 84, a. 5.

⁸³ *Ibid.*

for he is free who exists for his own sake, and he is slave who exists for the sake of good of the master.⁸⁴ And how can one strive for good *because* it is good unless he knows good from evil? To be free means to become liberated from the dangers and to be made immune to molestations. What is to be hoped for in this liberation? Freedom from corruption, from mortality, from mutability. Truth alone perseveres as incorruptible, immortal and immutable.⁸⁵ The possession of Absolute Truth will result in immortality and the process of progressing toward eternal truth is, in reverse, a process of rising above the mutable, and the corruptible of this world by the choice of goods that most efficaciously lead to this final goal. This choice of goods, however, cannot lead efficaciously to the final good unless the will which makes the choice is enlightened by an intellect drawing truth from reality in conformity with the Absolute Truth. Divorced from truth, liberty becomes an end unto itself and thus devoid of all responsibility, individual and social, and disordered because not ordered to anything higher than itself. In this way it reverts to the irrational appetite. In this way, too, human liberty which was to serve the common good of human nature is given primacy over that good with the result that it enslaves and subjects that nature to its whims and caprices. According to the law of universal order, the part is to serve the good of the whole. Exaggerated voluntarism subverts this ordination by making liberty the purpose of personality, thus reducing person to the role of the part.

HUMAN LIBERTY AND PERFECTION OF PERSONALITY

The perfection of anything lies chiefly in its essential relation to its proper end.⁸⁶ Human perfection consists in the development of personality which means the attainment of its proper end. There is no immediate contact in this life, between human personality and the ultimate source of its perfection. Growth in personal perfection is gradual and progressive because it is self-

⁸⁴ *In II Cor. c. III, lect. 3, vers. 17* ("ubi est spiritus domini ibi est libertas").

⁸⁵ *In Joan. c. VIII, 32.*

⁸⁶ *S. T. I-II, q. 55, a. 1.*

determined and follows upon concrete personal acts. The attainment of our natural final goal is above all a personal responsibility. It consists in the right use of liberty.⁸⁷ There is a two-fold perfection in every being: the perfection of complete substantial nature and the perfection through operation by means of which the goal of perfect happiness is reached.⁸⁸ Such personal acts by their very nature lead to ultimate destiny because they proceed from the rational soul which is capable of immortality not only according to species, but individually as well.⁸⁹ The only faculties that the rational soul possesses by means of which it perpetuates itself through activity are the intellect and will. The exercise of liberty must precede freedom of development.⁹⁰ Liberty looks primarily to operations within, and secondarily to operations without; the latter insofar as they promote the operations ad intra. Hence, liberty seeks primarily the intrinsic perfection of personality and not the acquisition of things. While the essence of personality has been given man when he received his nature, this essence is perfectible. It must be actuated to completion. This can be accomplished only by personal effort, by the exercise of liberty for universal good and truth under the direction of reason.

⁸⁷ *S. T. I-II*, q. 5, a. 7.

⁸⁸ *S. T. I*, q. 73, a. 1 c.

⁸⁹ *C. G. III*, c. 113.

⁹⁰ *S. T. II-II*, q. 134, a. 3, ad. 4.

CHAPTER III

THE ETHICAL BASIS OF HUMAN LIBERTY

HUMAN LIBERTY AND THE ORDER OF FINALITY

All things in the world form a universe which is unswervingly directed toward a necessary end, God. The ultimate end of the universe can be none other than God,¹ although the intermediary end of the universe is its essential order consisting in the mutual relationship of parts to themselves and to God.² Man is a principal and essential part of the universe, and although to a certain extent ordered to the whole, he nevertheless constitutes an end in two ways: inasmuch as he exists for his own good; and inasmuch as inferior nature is ordered to him as to an end.³ The universe as a whole and in all parts individually is ordered to God as to its proper end. Different beings, however, are thus ordered in different ways. Man directs himself to that end by virtue of his rational nature, all other beings are directed to their proper end by an external principle of intelligence, i.e. Divine. In any case Divine Providence is the ultimate principle which leads the whole universe and all its parts to God as to the proper absolute final end.⁴ Thus the principle of final end pervades the entire universe to its innermost depths in a most intimate way and it constitutes the absolute final principle which governs every being whatsoever, in existence, activity and achievement. Every being realizes its ultimate destiny in tending toward the Final Cause.

If freedom means anything significant, it means precisely that property of will that enables man to direct himself towards ends which he has selected in line with his ultimate destiny. There is absolutely no rhyme or reason in activity unless it is for a pur-

¹ C. G. III, c. 17.

² S. T. I, q. 15, a. 2 c; C. G. II, c. 39.

³ S. T. II-II, q. 64, a. 1, ad. 2.

⁴ C. G. III, c. 17.

pose. Every agent acts for an end. If he is an intelligent agent he cannot but act for a definite purpose at the risk of being unreasonable. Unless a self-directing agent establishes a definite end as a term of his activity the effect of his scheduled causality remains indifferent. As long as an agent remains indifferent to a number of effects, he remains indifferent to action. In that case, one effect will not attract his productivity any more than another and he remains unmoved.⁶ Without purpose human volition cannot exist. Liberty thus has no meaning unless it is a means to obtain a purpose, especially the ultimate purpose. All human actions must therefore bear a relation to ends, and all ends to the ultimate end; for nothing else participates in the nature of purpose unless it participates in the finality of ultimate purpose.⁸

Only being is good and only that is good which has being. Thus every nature desires first, the conservation of its own being, and secondly, more of being.⁷ A nature can conserve itself only by preserving what it already has, and acquiring what it as yet does not have. It strives for good in order to perfect its own nature. Perfection however, lies chiefly in the relation of a thing to its proper goal.⁸ The end or purpose is thus the perfection of an agent and the nature of a good is derived from the end.⁹ The desire for good is nothing less than the desire for being. But there is no being which is not derived from First Being, hence there is no desire for good that is not a desire for Supreme Being, or Good.¹⁰ Good, as such, is not merely the incentive for liberty but it is the final term, in the sense that everything desires to rest in the possession of that good, i.e. to enjoy well-being, to be happy. This is the ultimate in any finality and it is also the reason why anything else is desired.¹¹ The meaning of good

⁶ C. G. III, c. 2.

⁷ S. T. I-II, q. 1, a. 4; C. G. III, c. 2.

⁸ S. T. II-II, q. 64, a. 5; *De Ver.* q. 22, a. 1 c; ad. 4.

⁹ S. T. I-II, q. 55, a. 1 c.

¹⁰ 2 d. 37, q. 3, a. 2 c.

¹¹ Joannes a S. Thoma, *Cursus Philosophicus Thomisticus*, Taurini, Marietti, 1937, Vol. III, *Philosophia Naturalis*, p. 401.

¹² *Ibid.*

therefore, is derived from the relation of being perfectible.¹² Everything desires good as it desires its own perfection.¹³

This desire for good and for perfection is not determined to any particular good, but good universally taken; for every being desires and strives for a good that is naturally suitable to it.¹⁴ An end or good which is suitable to human nature is useful and necessary to human existence.¹⁵ Man either needs a thing, or has use for it, or finds pleasure in receiving or giving it. In any case he desires what is becoming to him by force of natural inclination. Anything therefore, which completes a being, helps to develop and perfect it, is good. It is a natural good if it perfects a being in its particular nature, and insofar as it perfects that nature it is a good proper to that nature. The tendency of a nature towards its own proper good is a natural inclination of that thing towards its own perfection. Among such fundamental inclinations there are some which man has in common with all reality; others which he shares in common with living things, and finally a class of goods that are distinctly human.¹⁶

GOD THE ULTIMATE END

In the universe, which constitutes the whole of created being, every creature is good because it participates in the Infinite Good. Every natural thing depends on another to conserve its own being. But as there is an order of goods there is also an order of relations among goods. As good is related to good, so the relations among various goods are related to the fundamental relation of creature to God. The particular good would not exist without a Supreme Good. To love a particular good is impossible without loving the Supreme Good in which all goods have their origin. If it is natural to love a particular good which is but the resemblance of the Supreme Good, it is far more natural to love the good resembled.¹⁷ And, inasmuch as every good is a perfection the

¹² *De Ver.* q. 21, a. 6 c.

¹³ *De Ver.* q. 22, a. 1 c.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* ad. 4.

¹⁵ *Comp. Theol.*, c. 3.

¹⁶ *S. T.* I-II, q. 94, a. 2 c.

¹⁷ 2 d. 1, q. 2, a. 2, *resp.*; *S. T.* I, q. 60, a. 5; *S. T.* I-II, q. 109, a. 3 c.

possession of which perfects the being acquiring it, the tendency towards such good is a tendency towards a greater likeness to God, i.e. assimilation to Him.¹⁸ To desire and to tend toward the good or a purpose, especially as it resembles the Good, is to desire and to will the end, the Supreme Good. Therefore God is the final end of man, since nothing else is good or a purpose unless it participates in divine likeness.¹⁹ Whatever a man desires or wills, he desires and wills for the ultimate end, and this for two reasons: first, because whatever a man desires he desires because it is good; and if it is not the perfect good, i.e. the final end, he desires it insofar as it leads to the perfect good. Secondly, the final end moves will in much the same way as the efficient cause causes all movement. Therefore, just as secondary causes do not move unless moved by the first cause, so too, secondary ends or purposes do not elicit the will unless by virtue of the final end, the all-ruling purpose.²⁰

HAPPINESS

All men desire to complete their own perfection so they all desire the final end. But not all men agree as to what constitutes their final end.²¹ Some seek their perfection in finite, particular goods. Whatever good he strives for, man is always striving for happiness. In order to conform to the utmost demands of human nature, happiness must be an interminable, complete possession of the perfect good.²² All men readily agree that human happiness should bring the utmost satisfaction of their desires.²³ On this score alone, happiness is an ultimate end and eliminates all temporal goods be they internal or external.²⁴ Complete happiness consists in the secure enjoyment of that which in every way possible perfects human nature. For the human intellect this perfec-

¹⁸ C. G. III, c. 24.

¹⁹ C. G. III, c. 25.

²⁰ S. T. I-II, q. 1, a. 6 c.

²¹ S. T. I-II, q. 1, a. 7; *De Ver.* q. 24, a. 7, ad. 6; ad. 11.

²² Boethius, *De Consolatione Philosophiae*, I, 3, *pros.* 2.

²³ S. T. I-II, q. 4, a. 8, ad. 3.

²⁴ S. T. I-II, q. 2, a. 2; a. 1; C. G. III, c. 28.

tion consists in the attainment of Absolute Truth, for the will it consists in the attainment of the Supreme Good.²⁵

The desire for perfect happiness in an intelligent being as man is conscious, knowable and knowing. It is the movement of the human will with all its strength toward the one supreme good that alone can bring that movement to perfect rest. To share in this beatitude man must will, and will in the light of his intelligence. He can will it or reject it. Hence, happiness and liberty are inseparable. Human liberty must have a purpose, and the purpose of the individual person must have absolute priority over any purpose of liberty. In other words, human liberty cannot have a purpose of its own. It must be identical with the purpose of man, which is perfect happiness. Thus human liberty is directed to happiness. Human liberty is a great good but it is not the *greatest*. There is a greater good, such as happiness itself which can be lost by the exercise of liberty. While human liberty is a necessary condition for human happiness, it is not the only condition. There is also virtue. Much depends on the use of liberty. Success in attaining the final end and happiness depends upon the proper ordering of human liberty to the final end. The tendency towards the final end is not free but necessary. But this tendency (*as willed*) or not, is and must be free. This implies a freedom for something, a freedom toward the final end. Freedom *from* something is unintelligible unless by it is meant the immunity from anything that might interfere with the attainment of the final end or happiness. All other expressions of human liberty derive their whole meaning and importance only in so far as they are related to this radical human liberty which safeguards the ultimate essential goal of man. Freedom from something, from constraint, is thus incomprehensible unless it is ordered and subordinated to the freedom for something, i.e. the fulfillment of ultimate destiny. There is no freedom without efficiency, and no efficiency without finality.²⁶

Radical human liberty cannot remain indifferent in the presence of destiny. It must therefore be directed by reason into the proper

²⁵ C. G. I, c. 37.

²⁶ C. G. III, c. 17 (6^m).

channels of human activity for the purpose of perfecting human personality. This purpose is not attained unless the process of perfection is completed and this process is not completed until the final goal is achieved. This is the only reason why the human will is radically unconstrained. The final goal is the ultimate guarantee and the sanction for the expression of human liberty, not merely in its long-range tendency but also in the immediate expression by way of personal acts, which constitute the process of this tendency toward the final goal.

When human liberty is separated from ultimate purpose, man himself becomes the final end. Thus a serious disorder arises in the universe, for then man alone, of all beings in the universe, acts without due and proper relation to the final cause. And yet, not man alone, for as long as all inferior nature seeks and finds its fulfillment in the fulfillment of person, the entire natural order is subverted. When man severs the chain of finality by his failure to subordinate his freedom to the final end, all of nature is deprived of perfection accruing from a realization of the final end. What has proceeded from the First Cause is not reverting to it according to the law of the universe, but to man. The less subordination of human liberty to an all-ruling purpose, the less reason there is in choice, because human actions derive their reasonable character from the end.²⁷ But the less reason there is in human action the less human is the action. With three kinds of appetite ruling man, unless the lower are subordinated to the higher, and the rational to the final end, no subordination is possible. What actually results is the subordination of rational appetite to the sensitive.²⁸ Human liberty is thus totally perverted for its ultimate purpose is not final happiness.

The tendency towards ultimate happiness presupposes a number of things such as being, life, activity.²⁹ These again presuppose a number of other things in the way of means, for, mere possession of being is no guarantee of reaching the final end; nor even mere being in *life*, nor mere being in *active* life. Without being,

²⁷ S. T. I-II, q. 14, a. 5, ad. 1.

²⁸ C. G. I, c. 47.

²⁹ S. T. I-II, q. 10, a. 2.

life and activity the attainment of the final end or happiness is impossible. But it is impossible to maintain these without the necessary means, goods of body and soul. As regards these goods, the end is the foundation and principle of all those things that are means to the end, because the means are not desired except for the end.⁸⁰ That which serves as the means to the end is not good of itself and absolutely, but only insofar as it bears a relation to the end. It is good and therefore the object of willing inasmuch as it participates in the goodness of the final end.⁸¹ There is but one ultimate end and all other ends are proximate or intermediate ends which are means in relation to the final goal. If they are by nature ordered to the ultimate end, the intermediary ends are goods and as such legitimately desirable; if they are not conducive to the final goal, they are not goods proper to man, in fact, they are evil if they deviate from the final goal.⁸²

There exists then an hierarchy of goods as well as of ends, all ruled by the ultimate end which is the Supreme Good. As natural as it is for human liberty to tend towards the ultimate end it is not less natural and proper for it to be ruled by the exigencies of this final end. The Supreme Good is the ultimate criterion which determines the propriety of the free choice of any particular good. Human liberty thus derives its character and its perfection from the right choice of proximate ends which will serve as means to the final end. The more the particular goods approach the Infinite Good the better they are and the more conducive to the final good. And conversely, since man's perfection lies in the possession of the Supreme Good, that good is more proper to him the more efficaciously and infallibly it leads him to the final goal. Human liberty is not an end in itself, in fact, it loses all reason for existence and nobility once it is unduly elevated to that dignity. Human liberty, related to the person as a whole, is but a mere property and as such it can have no other purpose than the purpose of person. To divorce human freedom from the final end is to sever the essential connection between human personality and

⁸⁰ *De Ver.* q. 22, a. 5 c.

⁸¹ 2 d. 24, q. 1, a. 3, ad. 3.

⁸² 2 d. 38, q. 1, a. 2 c.

its existential source and the absolute font of its perfection, for there is no perfection without an essential order to the final goal. Such a divorce of liberty from the final end spells the disintegration of personality. Prior to any exercise of human liberty there is the essential suitability of certain goods to human nature. How could man be truly free if his liberty can be exercised in pursuit of goods which are contrary to that nature? Man is by nature destined to the ultimate end, and whatever is needed to attain that end is also natural.³³ With regard to such things which are by nature necessary to obtain the final end human liberty cannot be indifferent or capricious. Thus things that are naturally conducive to a knowledge and love of God inasmuch as they conform to human nature, are naturally right.³⁴ It would be sheer perversion if human liberty could be used for their opposites.

The good of man is twofold: one is absolutely good, namely, the final end, and all those things essentially connected with it; and the other is a good only in a certain respect, insofar as it is good for the present (*ut nunc*) or apart from any necessary connection with the final end.³⁵ The particular good again is twofold: a true good inasmuch as it can be further ordered to the principal good; and an apparent good which does not lead to the final end.³⁶ The true good admits of greater or lesser perfection according to whether it leads a man more efficaciously to the Supreme Good. At the very summit, then, of the hierarchy of goods is the foremost and supreme good, happiness. Every other good occupies a place in this hierarchy corresponding to the relation it bears to the Supreme Good, which is the principle and foundation of all other values. Thus the next most perfect good is virtue; then the right disposition of the powers of the soul; the integrity of the body and finally external goods.³⁷ The essential characteristic of this subordination of goods manifests itself in this that one kind of good aids and completes the other in fulfilling the dominant purpose of personality. In this way, all external

³³ C. G. III, c. 129.

³⁴ *Ibid. in fine.*

³⁵ S. T. I-II, q. 114, a. 10.

³⁶ S. T. II-II, q. 23, a. 7 c.

³⁷ C. G. III, c. 141.

goods are essentially ordered to internal goods; the body is ordered for the good of the soul; external corporeal goods are good insofar as they promote the perfection of the good of reason which consists in beatitude and operation that is conducive to beatitude. Anything that impedes the growth of rational good is evidently detrimental to human personality.³⁸

Man is not his own supreme good but is ordered to a higher good. It is therefore impossible that the ultimate end of reason and will consist in the conservation of physical well-being. While the body is dependent on the soul, the latter is not dependent on the body. Therefore what is good for physical well-being is good and desirable only in so far as it promotes spiritual well-being.³⁹ The value of external goods is measured according to their suitability for promoting the perfection of the body, and the good of the body is measured according to its suitability to promote the good of the soul because means to an end are to be employed to the extent that they are needed to attain that end.⁴⁰ The various goods, spiritual, corporeal and external, are so ordered that the inferior serve the good of the higher; but all must be directed to the ultimate end. Some of these goods are more essential to human welfare than others and therefore are more desirable. The more essential are the goods for self-development, the greater is the freedom allowed in the pursuit of these goods. The demands of human liberty are more insistent when the goods needed for self-perfection are more necessary. While the individual is free when confronted with any number of ends, nature itself is inclined to that which is better for it. Human liberty owes it to the nature in which it is rooted to choose that which is best among the ends and goods for that nature.

In this right-ordered and essential relationship of goods to the final end we find the framework within which human liberty is best exercised and best fulfills its essential purpose. The exercise of human liberty guarantees the pursuit and attainment of the final end. This constitutes the very purpose of its existence and

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ *S. T.* I-II, q. 2, a. 5 c.

⁴⁰ *S. T.* II-II, q. 152, a. 2; II-II, q. 85, a. 3, ad. 2; q. 118, a. 5 c.

the essence of its great dignity. Accordingly, human liberty can hardly be indifferent to the hierarchy prevailing among goods. To fulfill its exalted office as the instrument in the pursuit of the supreme perfection which will decide the fate of personality, liberty must be ever consciously, austerely, and fittingly exercised in the interest of the *ever greater good*. Human liberty is but an instrument in the service of total personality and its purpose can in no way be at odds with the purpose of personality. Especially fearful would be the ensuing disorder if the purpose of human liberty should exceed the essential purpose of personality, as would be the case if personality were subordinated to the good of liberty. Such deordination is seriously detrimental not only to the individual personality but to the personality of others. The destiny of human liberty consists in the realization of the destiny of the whole person.

The exercise of human liberty must therefore be guided by reason for it alone can correctly evaluate the relative importance of diverse goods, and their essential relationship to the Supreme Good. The assertion that freedom for the sake of freedom constitutes the perfect calling for human liberty is inane. To assert further that it is better to choose an inferior good to a more noble one inasmuch as this would constitute the most noble expression of human liberty, is no less inane. That is equal to saying that man is most human when acting inhumanly; that he is best realizing his own perfection by undermining it; that he is most progressive when retarding his progress towards the final goal of his nature; that in order to be most perfectly happy he must be most unhappy. While there is a natural and universal desire for happiness, there is no such desire for misery. As long as human liberty cannot be exercised for human misery, neither can it be exercised indiscriminately in the pursuit of objects that are indifferently or adversely related to personal happiness. If by the very force of his nature every man flees from misery, it is ridiculous to assert that he can choose whatever good he pleases without attending to the essential relationship of that good to the final end. No sane man can even consider a choice between happiness and misery. No man in his right reason can be indifferent in the exercise of his liberty over goods.

THE MORAL ORDER AND HUMAN LIBERTY

There is no truly human activity which is not at once moral. Morality enters where first dominion of the will is found.⁴¹ Man is master of his acts which lead to an end.⁴² Morality consists precisely in the relation between act and end. The sum total of human volitions related to the ultimate end constitute the moral order. The ultimate end is thus the foremost and fundamental principle of the moral order, it stands in the same relation to matters of action as the self-evident principles to speculation.⁴³ The same compelling force that draws intellectual assent to self-evident principles also draws volitional activity to the first principle of action. Free in its acts, the will is obligated in its moral act by virtue of the infinite good. This is the source of all moral obligation, the moral constraint necessitating the free will. Moral obligation is based proximately upon human nature itself and its need for well-being. The three-fold source of moral necessity: the necessary impulse toward the final end; the necessary order between means and end; and finally, the knowledge of this order; all three applied to the free will produce the moral constraint which binds the will without violating it, and expresses the law *what one ought to do*. One ought to do what is necessary in order to gain ultimate happiness. All this is based on human nature. The good of human nature is determined as that which is best and most noble in man, namely, his reason.

An act is not human merely because it is produced by a human agent. It must be ordered to an object that is suited to and becoming to human nature. For, good is an aspect of being as desirable. The human act is itself and therefore one; it is true inasmuch as it is knowable; it is good inasmuch as it is desirable. A human act is good or bad to the extent that it has being.⁴⁴ If an act is not ordered to an object that conforms to human nature it is to that degree defective for it lacks being. If the act is exercised

⁴¹ 2 d. 24, q. 3, a. 2 c.

⁴² S. T. I-II, q. 1, a. 1, ad. 2. "*dominus actuum ducentium ad finem.*"

⁴³ S. T. I-II, q. 72, a. 5.

⁴⁴ S. T. I-II, q. 18, a. 1.

over an object proper to human nature it has proper being and therefore proper perfection: it is human and therefore good.⁴⁵ Properly speaking there are but two kinds of actions, human and therefore good, and anti-human and therefore bad. Since it is reason which constitutes human nature in a given species that is good for human nature which reason apprehends as a human good.⁴⁶ That action is in accordance with reason which is ordered to the proper end⁴⁷ because every good or evil action arises from a presupposed conformity or defect in being or the operative powers.⁴⁸ And as by the term "good" is understood to be that which is perfect, so by the term "evil" we understand the privation of perfection or being. Something is evil when it lacks the perfection which it ought to have.⁴⁹ This then is the very first moral principle: that good is to be done and evil avoided. This principle forms the basis of all other laws of nature.⁵⁰ Since however it is the will that is ordered to the object, the goodness or malice is rooted in the will.⁵¹ When human liberty fulfills its purpose by striving for good, it is in accordance with the first moral principle of nature; when striving for evil, it is contrary to that principle.

A moral act comprises several essential elements: the object, end and circumstances. From its object the human act derives its essential and specific morality.⁵² Furthermore, the moral quality of an act can be enhanced or diminished by circumstances.⁵³ The absence of any one essential element renders the action bad and the exercise of liberty remiss.⁵⁴ Thus good will be determined on the basis of the rationality present in the exercise of liberty, and evil by the lack of rationality. Natures, however, are natures be-

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ Cathrein, V., *Philosophia Moralis*, Friburgii, Herder, St. Louis, pp. 82-83.

⁴⁷ C. G. III, c. 127.

⁴⁸ S. T. I, q. 44, a. 1 c.

⁴⁹ *Comp. Theol.* c. 114.

⁵⁰ S. T. I-II, q. 94, a. 2 c.

⁵¹ S. T. I-II, q. 94, a. 2; q. 54, a. 3; q. 19, a. 7; C. G. III, c. 129.

⁵² S. T. I-II, q. 94, a. 2 c.

⁵³ S. T. I-II, q. 7, a. 3, ad. 3.

⁵⁴ S. T. I-II, q. 18, a. 4, ad. 3; q. 20, a. 3.

cause God made them thus. Not to fulfill what is of the essence of that nature is not to fulfill what is of divine will in that nature. Thus ultimately, the exercise of liberty is measured morally not only by its conformity to reason, but by its conformity to divine Essence.

Morality and liberty cannot be divorced. Liberty is good or bad depending on its use. Like every human act, which is not human unless free, liberty is determined in its morality by its object, circumstances and the end. It is not natural ability apart from moral ability, and moral ability cannot be divorced from all implications of duty. Conceived as radical natural freedom, as natural liberty, liberty gives free expression to the causal efficiency of the human will. There is no causal efficiency without final causality. It is duty, therefore, which moors causal efficiency to absolute reality and value. The use of liberty will be morally good if it is directed for the perfection of that nature in which it is rooted; evil, if it deviates from that perfection. The proximate norm for human liberty is human nature. Just as certain human actions are by their very nature intrinsically good or evil depending upon their conformity or non-conformity to rational nature, so too the exercise of liberty is by its very nature good or evil if its object is good or evil.⁵⁵ The freedom of an act does not make it morally good, or its lack, morally evil. Freedom must be presupposed when the moral character of the act is in question.

VIRTUE AND HUMAN LIBERTY

The human soul is not the source of its own existence and therefore, it cannot be the source of its own powers in the exercise of functions proper and natural to it. It possesses definite powers, or faculties, by means of which it can function. These faculties are the inner principles from which proceed immediately all our acts.⁵⁶ Yet the faculties are not the source of their own power of activity. They presuppose other more immediate principles which elicit their activity. Such inner principles are virtues, towards good; and vices towards evil. They are dispositions which

⁵⁵ S. T. II-II, q. 23, a. 7; C. G. III, c. 129.

⁵⁶ S. T. I, q. 77, a. 1.

influence the faculties, among them liberty, towards the one or other mode of action. The soul and its faculties are indeterminate but they can be inclined by such dispositions which can become fixed properties of the faculties and of the soul, mediately.⁵⁷ Virtues are those good qualities of the mind by which we live rightly and which no one uses ill.⁵⁸ Their proper subject is the will.⁵⁹ Human liberty is not of itself sufficient to maintain the right order of reason relative to acts for although it can preserve a right order already in possession, it cannot do so when this right order is not present.⁶⁰

Virtue makes the operation of the will to be an ordered operation.⁶¹ Man has been given being not merely that he may live, but that he may live well, i.e. a complete life by perfecting it. This consists in attaining the highest possible satisfaction of his powers. For such life virtue is most essential.⁶² To live well means to operate well⁶³ which means to exercise liberty well. There is a natural inclination to virtue for to act according to virtue is to act according to reason.⁶⁴ Virtues thus perfect us in the prosecution of natural inclinations.⁶⁵ Virtue is thus ordered to the good use of human liberty as to its proper act. It is nothing else than the good use of liberty.⁶⁶

Free activity is moral because there is no morality where freedom is lacking. There must therefore be a moral basis which can render man's will efficaciously desirous of constantly maintaining good relations with reason, and this is the work of virtue. The perfection of the effect depends upon the perfection of the cause and this must be true of both efficient and final causality. This means that the exercise of human liberty should be the most per-

⁵⁷ S. T. I-II, q. 49, a. 1.

⁵⁸ *De Ver.* q. 1, a. 2; S. T. I-II, q. 55, a. 4.

⁵⁹ *De Ver.* q. 1, a. 7; S. T. I-II, q. 56, a. 3.

⁶⁰ *De Ver.* q. 24, a. 14, ad. 8.

⁶¹ S. T. I-II, q. 55, a. 2, ad. 1.

⁶² *De Regimine Principum*, I, c. 14.

⁶³ S. T. I-II, q. 57, a. 5; *De Virt.* q. un., a. 8.

⁶⁴ S. T. I-II, q. 85, a. 2 c.

⁶⁵ S. T. II-II, q. 160, a. 1 c.

⁶⁶ S. T. I-II, q. 55, a. 1, ad. 2: "Nihil aliud est actus virtutis quam bonus usus liberi arbitrii."

fect possible and the purpose towards which its efficiency is directed, i.e. final cause, equally perfect. The more perfect the will, the more perfect the liberty and consequently, the more perfect the action proceeding from it. This perfection of action redounds to the good of the whole nature. Now the operation of liberty can be perfected only by the *right* exercise and this is prompted by virtue; virtue, therefore, renders the will prompt and consistent in the use of liberty.

Common to all virtue is the rectitude of will towards its proper end and towards the will of God, which is the rule of human will.⁸⁷ To live right is common to both virtue and liberty but, inasmuch as liberty can be misused, virtue is distinguished from liberty by defining it as a quality which one does not use ill.⁸⁸ The use of liberty is thus subject to the rule of virtue, for man as man to be ordained to good is to possess in himself complete control and orientation of his faculties towards action, wholly consonant with reason. This is the purpose of virtue: to ordain man to good.⁸⁹ Every human work is free, and every exercise of liberty is good if virtuous and conformable to reason. The exercise of our liberties must be regulated by the dictates of reason by being subject to virtue because the good of freedom is the good of reason which is the good proper to man as man. Now the virtue of prudence is the perfection of reason and possesses the good of reason essentially. Justice has for its purpose to make reason rule in all human affairs, so justice, too, makes use of the good of reason. Furthermore, this good of reason must be preserved in the face of opposition and difficulties, especially of the emotional and sensitive life of man. If reason's good is to prevail, human emotions must be tempered. Fortitude is the virtue that tempers human emotions by giving primacy to the good of reason. Finally, pleasure plays a big role in the life and activity of every man. If the inclination for pleasure is not kept within bounds, liberty in the pursuit of pleasure can easily lead man away from the good of reason. Therefore the virtue of temperance is necessary to

⁸⁷ S. T. I-II, q. 55, a. 4, ad. 4.

⁸⁸ 2 d. 27, a. 2, ad. 6.

⁸⁹ S. T. I-II, q. 56, a. 3.

assert and maintain the supremacy of the good of reason over the good of the senses.⁷⁰

The virtue of justice is the guarantee *par excellence* of the exercise of human liberties. Justice is the virtue of the will, "one is not said to be just because he knows what is right . . . but because he does what is right."⁷¹ Hence the most intimate relationship obtains between freedom to do and freedom to do what is right so that an action is truly free when it is just. Justice determines the right of a person to goods that are needed for self-perfection and establishes a correlative duty on the part of others to respect these rights to such essential goods. A right to an essential good, necessary for personal perfection, would be pointless if a person were not free to pursue that good unimpeded. The right to a good then constitutes the title to a free and unimpeded pursuit of such a good. Thus while justice establishes the right to goods, it also guarantees their pursuit. Now the formal object of justice is to regulate the activity of man to man, or in other words, to harmonize the liberty of one man with that of his neighbor. Actually, it preserves the essential independence of each man in the pursuit of the final end. For this reason the violation of justice is an injury and the obstruction of human liberties constitutes an injustice. To interfere with the essential independence of others by arbitrarily depriving them of what truly belongs to them constitutes a greater evil than the refusal to share one's own possessions or to injure others in the possession of things strictly not theirs. Justice then is the immediate and proximate external regulator of human liberties. Since there are definite numbers of goods which are essential to human welfare and to the perfection of human personality, it is the work of justice to regulate human liberty in the pursuit of these goods. There is a threefold justice to regulate the exercise of human liberty in three different directions. Commutative justice governs the free activity of individuals in their mutual relations; legal justice governs the exercise of human liberty with respect to the com-

⁷⁰ S. T. I-II, q. 57 a. 5; II-II, q. 47, a. 7; q. 123, a. 12; q. 142, a. 1; *De Virt. Card.* q. 1, a. 1 sq.; S. T. I-II, q. 66, a. 4.

⁷¹ S. T. II-II, q. 58, a. 4.

munity of the whole, inclining the individual will to fulfill his obligations to the community.⁷² Again, the community enjoys the freedom for self-development by striving for the common good. The personal, individual freedom is guaranteed by distributive justice in its relation to the community. It enjoins a reciprocal obligation on the part of the community not merely to ward off abuses of over-containing personal freedom but positively, by defining the relationship of the community toward its constituent members.

HUMAN LIBERTY, MALICE AND VICE

If virtue is a good disposition inclining the will to good and rendering the agent and his work good; vice, as its direct opposite, is a disposition of the will towards evil. Virtue is essentially ordered towards good acts, vice toward evil acts. Sins are acts contrary to nature and reason. The exercise of human liberty contrary to nature and reason results in sin which is an evil, disordered human act. To be evil, a human act must violate the right order of reason and the law of God.⁷³ This can happen in two ways, either because the will does not order its proper good to the final end, or because the good of the inferior appetite is not regulated according to the dictates of the superior appetite, i.e. reason.⁷⁴ The essence of vice consists in its disorder in that it is not conformable to rational nature. As virtue denotes two things, its own essence and its object, so too, vice. As the essence of Virtue consists in a good disposition in accord with nature, and by consequence, its object is to produce good acts; in like manner the essence of vice consists in a disposition contrary to nature and in the production of acts contrary to that nature.⁷⁵ Generally speaking there are as many kinds of vices as there are virtues, and what has been said about the relation of virtue and human liberty applies in the reverse to the relation of vice and human liberty.

As virtue makes the exercise of human liberty conform to rea-

⁷² S. T. II-II q. 58, a. 5 c; q. 61, a. 1 c.

⁷³ S. T. I-II, q. 71, a. 6.

⁷⁴ C. G. III, c. 109.

⁷⁵ S. T. I-II, q. 71, a. 6.

son, so vice makes the exercise of liberty oppose the good of reason. The abuse of human liberty, or its misuse, is always sinful for the purpose for which liberty exists is frustrated. Whereas the good use of liberty leads to the final goal, its abuse leads away from the final goal and happiness. Sin can be classified according as it violates a law of God, or of society, or of human reason.⁷⁶ A misuse of liberty takes place and gives rise to sin and vice, when men follow the inclination of their sensitive nature contrary to the order of reason.⁷⁷ The freedom given to man is a power which should enable him to procure the good best suited to his nature, essentially rational. Every sin follows upon the inordinate desire for temporal, material goods to the detriment of true, rational good. Such inordinate desires result from selfishness.⁷⁸

If we are looking for a single all-embracing motive for the misuse of liberty we find it in inordinate, unreasonable self-love. Selfishness and license are inevitably coincidental. Liberty exercised for the purpose of acquiring a good contrary to reason, or in preference to the good of reason, is not really liberty but the assertion of the primacy of the lower appetite over the superior. Since only rational appetite is truly free, a vicious exercise of freedom enslaves rational appetite.

“For as man is the best of the animals when perfected so he is the worst of all when sundered from law and justice. For unrighteousness is most pernicious when possessed of weapons and man is born possessing weapons for the use of wisdom and virtue, which it is possible to employ for opposite ends. Hence when devoid of virtue man is the most unholy and savage of animals.”⁷⁹

HUMAN LIBERTY AND THE ETERNAL LAW

In the exercise of its freedom the will is guided by reason along the paths of virtue. The human intellect however is not infallible,

⁷⁶ S. T. I-II, q. 72, a. 4.

⁷⁷ S. T. I-II, q. 71, a. 2, ad. 3.

⁷⁸ S. T. I-II, q. 77, a. 4.

⁷⁹ Aristotle, *Politics*, I, 1.

it is subject to the vicissitudes of ignorance, error and judgments beclouded by passion. If human liberty is to be guided by reason there need be some assurance and stability in intellectual judgments. To avoid serious error, both intellect and will must be regulated by some external norm or criterion in order that human liberty may maintain its essential relationship to the final goal and happiness. As long as man is finite and imperfect, his faculties, the principal means for happiness, are fallible. The intellect might propose objects to the will that, far from leading to happiness, may actually lead to misery. Thus the will, still free, would be freely led into error. The guide and norm of correct reasoning to arrive at the right moral principle is furnished by law. The liberty to choose means towards happiness is thus inseparable from the dictates of law.⁸⁰

The whole universe as created by God is also governed by Him. The universe, a community itself, contains within itself other communities, all ruled in whole and part by the eternal law of God.⁸¹ The Eternal Law is the eternal reason of God considered as universal and absolute legislator and ruling all He created.⁸² Thus conceived it is the very foundation of all law and the norm of all norms.⁸³ Divine reason is the rule of divine art whereby all things created are governed; it is "the divine reason or will of God ordaining the preservation of the order of nature and forbidding its disturbance." This Law has been promulgated simultaneously with the very natures produced and in the order produced. Just as all beings exist in virtue of participation in Divine Being, so they all act in virtue of participation in this Eternal Law. On account of his peculiar endowments, man is ruled by the Eternal Law in two ways, in common with all creatures ruled by Providence, and according to the knowledge he has of that law.⁸⁴ Man enjoys the singular prerogative of conducting himself to the final end predetermined by God. Such self-direction, how-

⁸⁰ S. T. I, q. 83, a. 4 c; q. 62, a. 8, ad. 3: "Libertas est vis electiva mediorum servato ordine finis."

⁸¹ S. T. I-II, q. 91, a. 1 c; C. G. III, c. 115.

⁸² S. T. I-II, q. 93, a. 1.

⁸³ *Ibid.* a. 3.

⁸⁴ S. T. I-II, q. 91, a. 2 c.

ever, does not exempt him from submission to the Eternal law. It merely signifies the freedom to pursue his proper end according to the knowledge and dictates of that law.

“ The light of reason within us is able to show us good things and guide our will in so far as it is the light of His countenance, that is, derived from His countenance. It is therefore evident that the goodness of the human will depends on the eternal law much more than on human law; and when therefore human reason fails, we must have recourse to the Eternal Reason.”⁸⁵

The reflection of Eternal Law in rational creatures is called natural law.⁸⁶ Natural law is a moral law and directs man to the final end and this constitutes the primary direction of human activity.⁸⁷ Thus ultimately both law and liberty have the same fundamental source, God. It is inconceivable that they can be contrary with impunity. There are then, two rules or norms that govern the exercise of liberty: human reason itself, the proximate and homogeneous rule, and the first rule, Eternal Law or Divine Reason.⁸⁸ Eternal law is to the order of human reason what art is to the artifact.⁸⁹ Inasmuch as Eternal Law is the divine art of government, whatever is contrary to the nature of the artifact, is no less contrary to the nature of divine art. A sin or vice which is an abuse of liberty, is thus contrary to the order of reason, whether this order be that of divine or human reason.⁹⁰ Every infraction of the precept of practical natural reason is *ipso facto* an infraction of the eternal law which rules it. Human liberty cannot be opposed to the order of human reason without at the same time being opposed to Divine Reason.⁹¹ This is not merely a question of disturbing an order established in things pertaining to our own benefit and merely at our own personal risk. By

⁸⁵ S. T. I-II, q. 19, a. 4.

⁸⁶ S. T. I-II, q. 91, a. 2.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.* ad. 2.

⁸⁸ S. T. I-II, q. 71, a. 6.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, a. 2, ad. 4.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹¹ S. T. II-II, q. 142, a. 1 c.

exercising liberty in opposition to the demands of that order, one sets himself up in opposition to God. In this way he subverts an order, as far as is within his reach, which consists in maintaining himself in essential relation to the end set up by God.

While Eternal Law is the ultimate guide for freedom, and natural law the intermediate guide, the proximate regulator of human liberty is conscience which is nothing else than the expression of eternal law to a particular case, here and now.⁹² Both conscience and human liberty are concerned with a particular action, but the former consists in pure knowledge, and in the simple application of that knowledge to an act; liberty applies cognition to appetite.⁹³ The dictates of conscience induce moral necessity by binding the will to a specific action, either of acceptance or rejection.⁹⁴ By following conscience man does not make a law for himself, but by an act of knowledge, by means of which he comes to know the law established by another, he is bound to fulfill the law.⁹⁵

"... just as in the theoretical recognition of truth reason has no creative activity but has to conform itself to a reality infinitely higher than itself so in its practical activity reason is not a creative and final norm but rather a means of making known a higher and infinitely perfect will." ⁹⁶

Only in this sense is "man his own lawgiver, since he instructs himself and urges himself on to that which is good."⁹⁷ The only true freedom worthy of personal dignity is the freedom in justice and law as promulgated by conscience, for, by it we discern whether our liberty is in conformity with our nature and Divine Reason or not;⁹⁸ by it man is shown what is truly becoming to him and what is bestial.⁹⁹

⁹² S. T. I-II, q. 94, a. 1; 2 d. q. 2, a. 4 (*in fine*).

⁹³ *De Ver.* q. 17, a. 1, ad. 4.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, a. 3 c.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.* ad. 1.

⁹⁶ S. T. I-II, q. 71, a. 6; 2 d. 42, q. 1, a. 4, ad. 3.

⁹⁷ *In Epist. ad Rom.* c. 2.

⁹⁸ 2 d. 42, q. 1, a. 4, ad. 3.

⁹⁹ *In Rom.* c. 6, lec. 4.

HUMAN LIBERTY AND THE ETHICAL BASIS OF SOCIAL LIFE

Every human act is the expression of innate human freedom striving for self-fulfillment. Our acts directed at something that is good may be referred at one and the same time to good under various formal aspects: as it is our own, as it is the good of our neighbor, as it is the common good of the community of which we are members, domestic or political, and finally, as it is the common good transcending all communities, i.e. God. Thus there are hierarchized ordinations of human activity comprising three distinct orders all having one common absolute goal. One is the order to be maintained in the individual person himself and is defined by the rule of reason; the other is the order establishing the essential relation between man and God which is defined by the rule of divine law; and inasmuch as man is naturally a social and political animal, there is a third order relating him to his fellowmen.¹⁰⁰ While this threefold order is established according to a preordained pattern, its completion depends upon the proper exercise of human liberty and man's success of maintaining himself in relation with the purpose of each order depends on the use of his freedom. Each order in its own way makes its own demands upon human liberty, qualifying and confining it to the pursuit of the good properly human and always with a view to the final goal.

The bed-rock of social life is found in the laws and nature of being. There is an all-basic natural order in the universe established by the Creator which serves as the very foundation and principle of all other orders. Man does not make this order but discovers it.¹⁰¹ To this material which man finds in nature, he applies his creative intellectual ability and his participated voluntary causal efficiency to produce an order on the model of the universal order.¹⁰² The human mind must seek in nature the pattern for social living, domestic and personal, and for the exercise of his liberty in that sphere. Obviously, to produce a social order comparable to the one established by God in nature, and one wherein human liberty can thrive, is futile unless due considera-

¹⁰⁰ S. T. I-II, q. 72, a. 4 c.

¹⁰¹ *In Eth.* I, 1.

¹⁰² *Prol. in Com. Poli.*

tion is given to the complete human nature, its essence and especially purpose. "According as men differ in their opinion about the end of human life, so they differ in their views about civic life."¹⁰³ Our idea of man will determine our idea of the nature and purpose of society.¹⁰⁴

Social living is natural and human. Like everything else in the universe, human society has being for perfection. It therefore exists for something else simply because it derives from a principle other than itself. Society is human first of all because it is promoted by an intellectual and volitional process strictly human, because the material, efficient, formal and relatively ultimate final causes are men. Particularly, it is human because although natural it is free, realized and developed as the fruit of human liberty and not by compulsions of drives and physical instincts.¹⁰⁵ It is human because it is moral, based on responsible human activity. These characteristics differentiate it from human personality since its component parts are individual persons. But the end of man is by no means less important than his physical existence, and consists in the attainment of his full individual perfection, an end that gives reason and purpose to his physical existence.

Society ceases to be human if in any way it opposes or obstructs the full development to perfection of the human nature concretized in the individual. The development of personality is obstructed when a given social organization conflicts with the demands of human nature and with the moral law, for it is this law that governs the process of perfection. To be truly human a given social organization must help the individual towards his ultimate perfection by aiding and encouraging and facilitating in all ways possible the perfection of the faculties of intellect and will, for these give the individual title to full human perfection. Essential to this process of personal development is liberty, not a mere absence of extrinsic constraint but full moral freedom as an essential minimum which would allow the individual person to attain

¹⁰³ *In Pol.* I, 1.

¹⁰⁴ *De Reg. Prin.* I, 14.

¹⁰⁵ *I Cor.* c. 11, *lec.* 4.

his individual ends towards which his nature inclines him.¹⁰⁶ At the very least such moral liberty excludes a condition of servitude wherein the personal activity of an individual is reduced to the role of instrumentality. A truly human social organization will never permit the use of one man to further the ends of another or a group. If it fails in this the social order loses its right to existence since it refuses to recognize human personality, the very basis and reason for any society.

Although naturally inclined to social life, the individual still retains the inviolability of his human personality which must be recognized by society. It is natural liberty, an essential property common to human nature, which is the basis for human equality. The supreme end of one man does not differ in the least from the supreme end of another. The fact that man is ordered to a final end gives him title to freedom to pursue that end and also title to the essential means necessary for the attainment of that end. It is purely and alone the possession of human nature with its endowments of freedom that calls for such an essential ordination to the final end. Thus nature has made all men equal in liberty because the necessity of striving for the final goal is as imposing with one man as with another. It is due to his human nature that one man is not ordered to another as to an end.¹⁰⁷ For, wherever an equality of nature obtains among many, equality also obtains in those properties that essentially follow upon that nature.¹⁰⁸ In the order of nature no one man is superior to another.¹⁰⁹ All men are by nature equal and therefore have equal natural rights.¹¹⁰ Fundamental equality without a religious and virtuous basis easily degenerates into extreme selfishness.¹¹¹ Fundamental human equality by no means denotes a physical property. All men are equal in liberty but not

¹⁰⁶ S. T. II-II, q. 104, a. 4; *De Reg. Prin.* I, c. 1; c. 2; S. T. I-II, q. 90; q. 95; q. 96.

¹⁰⁷ 2 d. 44, a. 1, a. 3, ad. 1.

¹⁰⁸ 2 d. 25, q. 1, a. 4, ad. 2.

¹⁰⁹ 2 d. 4, q. 1, a. 4, ad. 5; cfr. Cajetan.

¹¹⁰ S. T. II-II, q. 104, a. 5c.

¹¹¹ De La Bedoyer, M., *Vital Realities*, in *Essays in Order*, no. 7; Macmillan Co., 1932, p. 260.

in natural perfections.¹¹² A social organization, such as Communism, which ignores the fundamental causes of essential equality and tries to eradicate the natural causes of accidental inequality actually works against human nature and thus itself ceases to be human. Such social leveling of human society by artificial super-imposed methods of regimentation, regularity and standardized external deportment does violence to basic human liberty and dignity of personality.

The essential equality and accidental inequalities of men are in turn bases for man's essential self-sufficiency and accidental insufficiency. On the one hand his essential self-sufficiency is guarantee for self-perfection. Although the final end is common to all men, it still is a proper end as far as each individual is concerned. The responsibility of attaining that end is exclusively personal, simply because happiness is a purely personal matter. Such essential sufficiency enables the individual to fulfill his destiny freely without unwarranted interference.¹¹³ There is a measure of essential independence which no man need surrender, in fact, dare not surrender to any human authority, the right and obligation to fulfill his ultimate destiny. This independence is an essential prerequisite of self-direction to the end.

While essentially self-sufficient, man is accidentally insufficient unto himself, for human life is not mere physical existence. One man does not suffice for himself to provide all that is necessary for a full human life. For this reason man is member of domestic society in order that he may acquire what is necessary, in the way of material, moral and intellectual elements, for the preservation and continuation of life; and a member of civil society in order that he may acquire what is necessary for the full and perfect life.¹¹⁴ The prime purpose of every man's life is to adhere to his First Principle and for this he needs other things, and especially other men.¹¹⁵

The human person is both inferior and superior to society. Men already enjoy existence independent of society. Society is not a union for the purpose of preserving that bare existence, which is

¹¹² 2 d. 44, q. 1, a. 3, ad. 1.

¹¹³ S. T. II-II, q. 104, a. 5 c; 3 d. 44, q. 1, a. 3.

¹¹⁴ *De Reg. Princ.* I, 1; C. G. II, c. 129; *In I Eth.* lec. 1.

¹¹⁵ C. G. III, c. 128.

not communicable, but of promoting activity which will add to that existence the note of goodness, which is communicable by personal activity. Man is prior to society if for no other reason than that we derive the purpose of society from the purpose of man.¹¹⁶ While society is real it is but an accidental reality and it imparts to man accidental being since he already possesses substantial being.¹¹⁷ Man is a substantial reality and his personality possesses absolute value while the reality of society is that of an accidental moral unity and participates its value from personality, which is always individual.¹¹⁸

That which is everlasting pertains to the primary and dominant intention of nature. The human person alone is destined for immortality while human society is a purely temporal and provisory reality. The person is the bearer and initiator of all acts among which are the social. Without personal activity there can be no social organization much less, social activity. Human personality thus, is the very reason for the existence of society since it alone requires, and is entitled to, perfection and completion. The universe does not constitute his final end, the whole reason for his existence. If not the universe, then neither the community, domestic or civil, but God alone constitutes that end.¹¹⁹ If man is subordinated to society it is for his own good, not the good of an abstraction. But being a composite of spirit and matter, he is physically mortal. His body is the source of his insufficiency. To the degree that society supplies these deficiencies arising from matter, man is inferior to society. His essential freedom, equality and self-sufficiency establish the limits of his subordination to the community. His insufficiency can be supplied only with the understanding that he is self-sufficient. Without his self-sufficiency no society could even be organized, much less grow, strengthen, and develop and in turn help the individual towards fuller development. Every man contributes according to his self-sufficiency

¹¹⁶ *De Reg. Prin.* I, 14.

¹¹⁷ *De Pot.* q. 7, a. 1, ad. 9.

¹¹⁸ *S. T.* I, q. 116, a. 2, ad. 3; q. 13, a. 7 c.

¹¹⁹ *C. G.* III, c. 17; 25: "bonum universi non est ultimus finis hominis sed ipse Deus."

to the common welfare, and in turn the group supplies each man's insufficiencies.¹²⁰

The final cause is the cause of all causes.¹²¹ The end of society cannot differ from the end of man.¹²² The object of each man's life is to live a life of virtue because only in this way can he realize his ultimate destiny.¹²³ The good life is a virtuous life and it is the end for which men live in society.¹²⁴ Social life is but one aspect of personal human activity and it cannot therefore, have an absolute purpose all its own and apart from the end of human life. The final cause of society, the purpose for which it exists is, simply man, because there can be but one supreme end to human life. Reduced to a single concept the purpose of society is the common welfare of all associated members. Both the proper good of the individual and the common good of associated men must be truly human, so that whether striving for his individual good or the common social good he is striving for the good which perfects human nature. This social purpose is prosecuted with the same activity as is individual purpose, namely, personal activity of intelligence and will, with this difference that social purpose requires cooperative united effort.

The common good is inseparable from human happiness. If it were separable, then it would be impossible to get men to strive for it cooperatively. Moreover it would not be a human good. The acquisition of material goods is related and subordinated to the acquisition of virtue because such goods are mere aids in the pursuit of happiness. But happiness is twofold: perfect, i.e. beatitude, and imperfect, of this life.¹²⁵ Since beatitude is the final perfection then temporal happiness is but the perfection of this life wherefore the common good is not an end in itself but is essentially ordered to an ulterior and higher end. Thus, it is not the whole of goods, all good things, but merely a means to the achievement of the state of total possession, and as such, a partial

¹²⁰ *De Reg. Princ.* I, 15.

¹²¹ *C. G.* III, c. 17.

¹²² *De Reg. Princ.* I, 14.

¹²³ *Ibid.*

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

¹²⁵ *S. T.* II-II, q. 186, a. 3, ad. 4.

good that only partially perfects human nature. Whoever strives for the common good strives for his own proper good for two reasons: there can be no proper good without the good of social life; and, being a part of the whole, domestic and civil, man hardly thinks of his own good without considering the good of the community.¹²⁶

To achieve proper development of their personalities such conditions must be created in which the individuals themselves, in communion and in cooperation with each other and as becomes their dignity and inherent freedom, can realize their destiny. Man is rational and free. The person works out his own destiny by means of personal acts, the expression of his innate liberty. The responsibility for attaining his destiny belongs exclusively to each person. Society does not have such a destiny, nor the total obligation or responsibility to fulfill it. Social and communal activity must be free personal activity albeit cooperative. It would be impossible for human beings generally to progress in personal perfection under conditions that militate against right order and reason which would be the case if social activity were de-personalized by being divested of its immanent, free and responsible character. It does not belong to the state to *develop* the individual but to help him develop himself by supplying his insufficiencies. Self-development in the social sphere cannot be at cross-purposes with self-determination. The power of radical liberty, rooted in man's very nature, is prior to social development since it constitutes the principal means for the development of the whole man. The common good is the end of each individual person *as living* in society.¹²⁷ Man in every respect is totally ordered to only one final end. His being ordered to any intermediary ends has significance only in view of his final end.

The value of society, and particularly the state, is actually determined according to the measure that it facilitates and expedites the personal tendency to the ultimate end. If it arrests, retards or thwarts the essential movement of the person to his final goal such society is anti-human and tyrannical. Either it respects this

¹²⁶ S. T. II-II, q. 47, a. 10, ad. 2.

¹²⁷ S. T. II-II, q. 58, a. 9, ad. 3.

essential tendency of the person to ultimate perfection, and then it must respect human liberty, and is therefore a good social organization; or it hinders the full spontaneous movement of person to the final goal and then it violates human liberty and is therefore an evil organization. It respects the essential relationship of person to final goal when it supplies the insufficiencies but does not interfere with the essential self-sufficiency of each person except when it is contrary to natural moral law. Human insufficiency is supplemented by the existence of necessary conditions which would enable the individuals to provide for their own personal development. Such conditions would comprise a just and equitable system of laws, based on the natural moral law; equal protection of all members in their pursuit of happiness within the framework of just laws; social organization, thriving social institutions such as vocational groups, opportunity to work, education according to need and capacity, in brief, all those conditions of a well-organized social structure in which individuals can themselves develop their abilities, aptitudes and realize their legitimate aspirations all dominated by the chief purpose, virtuous living.

No conditions are more essential and immediately necessary for the promotion of the common welfare than that of peace and order. More than anything else, everyone naturally desires peace.¹²⁸ The very fact that man has natural desires demonstrates that man desires the satisfaction of what he desires. To attain what one desires without peace is impossible.¹²⁹ The attainment of a good and the satisfaction of a good desire can be impeded either internally, by what in man is contrary to the object of his desire; or, externally by the desire of another. Both kinds of interferences do away with peace.¹³⁰ Peace as an essential condition for successful pursuit of good and happiness must be interior and external, a peace that reigns between the rational and animal appetite in any one man, and the peace that reigns between the personal appetites of men living together. The cause of peace is justice which promotes tranquillity by removing the occasions

¹²⁸ S. T. II-II, q. 29, a. 2.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

for strife and disorder.¹⁸¹ Peace is not a virtue but the effect of virtue.¹⁸² But as virtue promotes peace, vice opposes it, especially the vices of discord, contention, schism, quarrels and war.¹⁸³ Peace is tranquillity of order existing mostly in the will.¹⁸⁴ Order obtains only when the will of each is in accord with his rational nature and with the final good, and in accord with the wills of other men.¹⁸⁵ If such peace is wanting then the exercise of human liberty loses its efficacy and security, it will be unreliable because haphazard, its effect unpredictable. That which characterizes human activity essentially becomes accidental. Human liberty is subjected to the vicissitudes of fear, the indecisiveness of fortune, the determinism of fate. Rule of reason is replaced by rule of emotions and passions. If human liberty is to thrive and fulfill its purpose peace must reign in man's threefold relationship: to himself, to his neighbor, and to God.¹⁸⁶

AUTHORITY AND LIBERTY

Whenever there is an obligation toward a definite end, there is also a correlative right to the means necessary for the attainment of that end. Without the right to such means an obligation is pointless. Since it is the duty of the state to promote the common good it must have the right to the necessary means, which can be reduced to the concept of government expressed by authority and law. The duty of the state is similar to the duty of the individual person: to maintain coordination of man's supreme end with his social and individual ends. Society is a union of men, free intellectual creatures, towards a common purpose. The very liberty of individuals is a threat to that common purpose unless the activity of all is coordinated towards attaining that common goal. Men living in society have a profound basis and a powerful motive for harmonious activity in the common principle of human nature, the social common good. This end, however, is not bound strictly

¹⁸¹ *S. T.* II-II, q. 29, a. 3, ad. 3; q. 180, a. 2, ad. 2.

¹⁸² *S. T.* II-II, q. 29, a. 3.

¹⁸³ *S. T.* II-II, q. 34, a. 37; q. 39.

¹⁸⁴ *S. T.* I-II, q. 70, a. 3 c; II-II, q. 29, a. 1 c.

¹⁸⁵ *S. T.* II-II, q. 29, a. 1, ad. 1.

¹⁸⁶ *In Joam.* c. 14, *lec.* 7; *In Isa.* c. 26; in *II Cor.* c. 13, *lec.* 3.

and necessarily to this or that particular means. An efficient, external principle of unity is required which can unify the wills of men in the use and choice of means just as the single common end unites them in their general desire for self-perfection. Lacking such an efficient principle of unity, adaptations of means would differ among individuals and particular groups. This would destroy social cooperation and any possibility of realizing the natural good to be derived from social living.¹³⁷

To create and maintain order and the unity of peace is the chief concern of authority.¹³⁸ It must curb the selfish use of liberty, or even of group selfishness, which would frustrate the common aim of society.¹³⁹ It must maintain harmony and balance between individual and common good.¹⁴⁰ Authority itself must be an intelligent principle of operation and it can perform its function best by stimulating the intelligences and wills of the individual members.¹⁴¹ The more efficacious a regime is in promoting the unity of peace, the more useful will it be.¹⁴² No authority can effectively perform its essential functions unless it wins the respect of its subjects by observing and respecting its own limitations. Thus the means employed by authority in fulfilling its proper functions can in no way be contrary to human nature. The subjects of authority are moral beings, hence the means employed must be predominantly moral. The will is essentially free and is not moved unless possessing knowledge of the end towards which it is to move. Authority therefore must appeal to reason in order to induce the assent and cooperation of social members. As a moral being, man must be directed morally to the proper end, for as reason guides the individual to his proper end, reason must also be the guiding principle which directs him to his social end.¹⁴³

The only force capable of keeping individuals well-disposed to the demands of authority and the commonweal is virtue, for it

¹³⁷ *De Reg. Prin.* III, c. 9; c. 1; *Com. In Polit.* I, lec. 1.

¹³⁸ *De Reg. Prin.* I, 1.

¹³⁹ *S. T.* I-II, q. 56, a. 7.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, q. 9, a. 2.

¹⁴¹ *S. T.* II-II, q. 102, a. 2.

¹⁴² *De Reg. Prin.* I, c. 2.

¹⁴³ *S. T.* II-II, q. 109, a. 2 c.

is the function of virtue to render a man's actions good, whether the actions be social or individual.¹⁴⁴ The special virtues corresponding to the social order are principally the social virtues of justice, and charity. Social justice is a group virtue which promotes the good of the group. The relation of each person to his community is the relation of part to whole; therefore every good act of such a man redounds to the common good. Consequently, the acts of every other virtue help the common good such as commutative justice, temperance, etc.¹⁴⁵ There are certain minimum terms required for life together; if these are not present the purpose of social life is thwarted. Thus a proper disposition towards authority and fellowmen is required.¹⁴⁶ Since life in society is natural for man, that is also natural without which social life is impossible.¹⁴⁷

The obligations imposed by authority, if just, do not diminish liberty. The will cannot will evil as such; if it does will evil it does so in order to acquire some good. But in willing the common good, the will by no means chooses evil, for while freedom has been conferred upon man for the purpose of acquiring good, by the very fact that the individual is striving for the common good he is not only exercising his liberty, but maintaining it and enhancing it, for he is achieving that for which liberty has been given him, good. Liberty has no significance or value unless it procures good for the individual person. It is thus efficacious when exercised in the interests of the common good. Far from being frustrated, no better use of liberty can be conceived than that it should strive for the common good, the good that supplies the individual's insufficiency and inequality. The only utility in liberty is the good it can procure, especially the good that responds to basic human needs and promotes personal perfection. To insist on the mere exercise of liberty without the hope of good, particularly, ever greater good, is to waste and prostitute a priceless power and to deprive personality of its proper perfection. Freedom cannot be more important than happiness. It can be no

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁵ *S. T.* II-II, q. 58, a. 5 c.

¹⁴⁶ *S. T.* I-II, q. 100, a. 5 c.

¹⁴⁷ *C. G.* III, c. 129.

more than an instrument for happiness which is promoted by the possession of true good, not the mere exercise of a power for the sake of exercise. The inclination to happiness is more radical, powerful and natural than the inclination to liberty, especially accidental, external liberty. Liberty and essential happiness are inseparable. The common good is an essential factor for happiness, for it is more directly involved in happiness than liberty since it is a constituent of happiness, while liberty is but an instrument for happiness. Liberty is the power wherewith man reaches his goal of happiness. It exists no less for the common good than it does for the individual good. In any event, it is for good. This does not depreciate liberty, but actually gives it meaning and purpose. For a power to do what it is by nature intended to do is not evil but good. For the eye to do what it is by nature intended to do, see for the good of man, is not bad but good. Who will say that freedom is good by doing evil? How can liberty fail to be good when it seeks the common good which is the good of the individual who possesses liberty?

CHAPTER IV

NATURE AND ESSENCE OF HUMAN LIBERTY

NATURE AND ESSENCE OF LIBERTY

The most obvious characteristic of liberty is absence of constraint. This is an important aspect of liberty but does not constitute its essence. Freedom denotes a facility which arises by a removal of an impediment in the sense that one's freedom of action is not impeded in its exercise by some compulsions.¹ Since there is no freedom of action without a corresponding freedom of judgment, St. Thomas identifies it generally with freedom of judgment, which denotes an act, but through common usage it is also understood as the principle of the act. It signifies not so much actual freedom as it does the power whereby one is able to judge freely.²

Liberty as action is opposed to necessity of action. Such necessity or compulsion may be encountered in two distinct orders, viz. the physical and the moral orders. In the moral order necessity assumes the form of an obligation binding the will in its free activity. Such an obligation imposes itself upon the subject who can and ought to accept it. Moral necessity is expressed in moral law. In the physical order necessity or compulsion manifests itself as constraint excluding the possibility of determining oneself by choice. Immunity from the first type of necessity is moral liberty. The absence of physical necessity characterizes physical, or natural, liberty.

Physical liberty is subdivided into freedom from coercion and freedom from necessity. The former excludes all violence or compulsion coming from an extrinsic principle as resisted by the will. Such an immunity is inseparable from will, and its absence destroys will. The latter consists negatively in an immunity from

¹ *De Ver.* q. 24, a. 4, ad. 1.

² *De Ver.* q. 24, a. 4, in prin.

intrinsic constraint, i.e. the necessity that would determine the will to the singular. Positively considered, it is the unrestricted power of the internal principle to determine itself to act and to a choice of action. It is also known as the liberty of indifference.³ This liberty of indifference is but a property of the will and can be considered from three points of view: on the part of the volitional act, the power to will or not to will, love or not love, and then it is known as the liberty of exercise (*libertas contradictionis*); on the part of the object willed the will can fix its choice and mark its preference among various multiple objects that are proposed to it and this constitutes the liberty of specification; from the point of view of the end the will can choose good or evil.⁴ This threefold liberty is but a threefold expression of the one essential property of the will which is found preeminently in the so-called liberty of contradiction, which allows a choice between willing or not willing.

In effect, he is truly free who is master and cause of his act. Whoever can choose between two contradictories subject to his choice is master and cause of his act. This is liberty of contradiction and it alone, therefore, is essential to liberty. Every other form of liberty is but an expression of this radical liberty.⁵ Whatever then, is not a cause of its own act is not free. And when is one the cause of his own act? Whatever is not moved, or if acting, is moved by others is not cause of its own act, and therefore, not free. Only those agents which move themselves to act are free.⁶ The power of choice is essentially voluntary and where there is no choice there is no will. There is no real distinction between the power of choice and will just as there is no real distinction between intelligence and reason. To choose and to will pertain to one and the same faculty.⁷

³ Joannes a S. Thoma, *Cursus Philosophicus Thomisticus*, Taurini, Marietti, 1937, vol. III, p. 399.

⁴ *De Ver.* q. 22, a. 6 c.

⁵ *S. T. I.* q. 83, a. 3 c. "Proprium liberi arbitrii est electio. Ex hoc enim liberi arbitrii esse dicimur quod possumus unum recipere, alio recusato, quod est eligere; et ideo naturam liberi arbitrii ex electione considerare oportet."

⁶ *C. G. II.* c. 48.

⁷ *De Ver.* q. 22, a. 6: "liberum arbitrium nihil aliud est quam voluntas."

The choice one makes by exercising volition cannot be an effect of caprice but must be an act of reasoned will. The very concept of voluntary choice implies reason for it is impossible without reason. There can be no exercise of free choice where there is no exercise of free judgment, and there can be no exercise of free judgment unless there is the power of reflecting over one's act. This requires an intellect.⁸ Any act which is short of reason cannot be a perfect product of the free will any more than a sophism can be a perfect act of the intellect. The power of choice, which is the essence of liberty, denotes not an absolute but something relative to reason. Thus, both reason and will enter into the definition of liberty.⁹

While liberty cannot be divorced from reason and truth, neither can it be divorced from good for it is the work of reason to discern the true good. Does it pertain to the essence of liberty to choose evil? By no means! Nature tends to the true and the good. The true and the good constitute the totality of freedom's perfection. The power to choose evil as such is no more an expression of liberty than an erroneous judgment is a perfect expression of intelligence. The power to choose evil is not an essential and positive quality of liberty but a defect of nature. Liberty is a power of the will to attain some good. It is utterly repugnant to the very nature of the willing faculty and to the person as a whole that evil as such should be the object of liberty, just as it is utterly repugnant to the appetite of a brute if, due to a perversion of its instinct, it would not seek its natural good but something detrimental to itself. Liberty is ordered naturally and essentially to good. It cannot remain indifferent in the presence of good and evil, it is only by defect of nature and under the appearance of good that the will is inclined to evil.¹⁰ Whatever hinders the will from good is an *absolute* impediment to its perfection and a cause of its corruption. On the other hand, whatever hinders the will from embracing evil is not an impediment to liberty *per se* but only relatively and accidentally, and therefore

⁸ C. G. II, c. 48.

⁹ *De Ver.* q. 24, a. 6, ad. 1.

¹⁰ 2 d. 25, q. 1, ad. 2.

does not corrupt liberty, just as what impedes ignorance is not corruptive of intelligence.¹¹

The power to embrace evil, especially moral evil, is no more a perfection of freedom, and therefore laudable, than is ignorance a perfection of the intellect and cancer a perfection of the body. The work of evil is a privation and therefore an imperfection for it is contrary to the very nature of personality in which will is rooted. Perfection consists in an operation proper to a nature. Goodness and perfection of things is dependent upon their being; evil, again, is a privation of a perfection proper to a being, something that it ought to have, just as sickness is a privation of health. To assert that choice of evil pertains to the essence of liberty is to assert that a privation of being constitutes being, an obvious contradiction. As a matter of fact, even the power to choose good does not pertain to the essence of freedom directly and primarily but only secondarily, for an essential constituent of a nature is not determined by that toward which a nature is ordered, but by that which goes to make up a given nature.¹²

Freedom, considered in its term, does not bear an identical relationship to good and evil. Its relation to good is essential, natural and primary. Its relation to evil, however, is accidental by way of defect and apart from nature (*praeter naturam*).¹³ Liberty bears the same relation to the choice of means for an end as the intellect bears to conclusions. The intellect is able to proceed to diverse conclusions on the basis of self-evident principles. When the intellect embraces a conclusion at variance with first principles it does so by defect.¹⁴ In like manner the will, when choosing means that are at variance with proper ends does so by defect. For this very reason freedom from sin is the only true freedom for the natural inclination of reason is towards justice, while evil is contrary to the natural inclination of reason.¹⁵ Yet, although the power to choose evil is not of the essence of liberty it is nevertheless, a consequent of liberty inasmuch as that power

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *De Ver.* q. 24, a. 10, ad. 12.

¹³ *S. T.* III, q. 34, a. 3, ad. 1; I, q. 63, a. 1, ad. 4.

¹⁴ *S. T.* I, q. 62, a. 8, ad. 3.

¹⁵ *S. T.* II-II, q. 193, a. 4 c.

is found in a created nature in which defect is possible.¹⁶ To will evil is neither liberty nor even a part of liberty.¹⁷ What is accidental to a thing cannot be reckoned among its essential elements. A nature cannot be inclined naturally to that which is accidental to its essence and a source of its misery. Freedom from righteousness is not true freedom nor does it pertain to its essence but only accidentally.¹⁸ The power to evil no more enters into the essential composition of liberty than sickness into that of health, or ignorance into the essence of wisdom, or war into the essence of peace. The will is drawn to good by necessity of its very nature and the indeterminateness of the will derives precisely from the power of reason to propose diverse conceptions of good.¹⁹ Privation, defect, and negation are not willed for themselves but are willed only indirectly.²⁰

If not naturally inclined towards evil, why does the will choose it at all? Precisely because the object proposed to it is proposed as a good, actually, an apparent good.²¹ The will by force of its nature seeks good, but does not *understand* good as good. An inclination to evil, therefore, follows upon defect in apprehension. Such a defect occurs in the intellect in two ways: on account of the inherent deficiency of the intellect itself; and, on account of the influence of some extrinsic principle, either because of the fallibility of judgment over a *particular* good, as when it judges that to be conducive to the end which is not actually so, or when the passions and emotions becloud the clarity and decisiveness of its judgments.²² The power of liberty is concerned with choosing the proper means that lead to happiness. Whenever we have a correct judgment concerning the means to happiness it is impossible to prefer evil.²³ Granted even the absence of defect in the soul or in the nature of liberty itself, a defective act can still

¹⁶ *De Ver.* q. 24, a. 3, ad. 2; a. 7, ad. 4.

¹⁷ *De Ver.* q. 22, a. 6.

¹⁸ 2 d. 25, q. 1, a. 5, ad. 3.

¹⁹ *S. T.* I-II, q. 17, a. 1, ad. 2; *De Ver.*, q. 22, a. 6, ad. 5.

²⁰ *S. T.* I, q. 59, a. 3, ad. 3.

²¹ *De Ver.* q. 24, a. 8 c.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ 2 d. 7, q. 1, a. 1, ad. 1.

follow because a defective act is caused by a defective principle of operation, i.e. the will.²⁴ Such a defect is twofold: one, the potential cause of evil, stems from the finite nature of the will, created *ex nihilo*. This is not an actual and positive cause of evil otherwise the will would be prone to evil by its very nature.²⁵ Another defect stems from the volitional act itself, which due to its imperfection, causes evil. This occurs when the will turns unduly (*indebito*) to some object.²⁶ Even when error in judgment and defect in volition are impossible, as it is with angels and the beatified, liberty exists whole and entire. For, if to do evil is an *indication* of liberty, it is immeasurably more so to do good.²⁷ To do evil is nothing else but to defect from the good that conforms essentially to one's nature and which constitutes its perfection,²⁸ wherefore a good use of liberty is virtue.

But is not the power to do evil praiseworthy in itself; and, if praiseworthy, why should it not pertain to liberty?²⁹ It is only by accident that to do evil is praiseworthy in the sense that the action itself is not necessitated.³⁰ If it pertains accidentally to praiseworthiness, *a fortiori*, it pertains accidentally to liberty. Something can be praiseworthy in an inferior being which is vituperable in man,³¹ as for example, ferocity in a lion.³² Praiseworthiness does not depend upon the power to do evil but upon the power to do good and doing it, otherwise the high efficiency demonstrated in Nazi and Communist concentration camps should call forth admiration. To be capable of sin is praiseworthy in the sense that it offers proof for the absence of necessity in willing,³³ but the world is much better off without such demonstration. We may as well admire a man for being ignorant *freely*.

²⁴ *De Ver.* q. 24, a. 7; ad. 8.

²⁵ 2 d. 34, a. 3, ad. 4.

²⁶ 2 d. 34, q. 3, ad. 4; 1 d. 42, q. 2, a. 1, ad. 3.

²⁷ *De Ver.* q. 22, a. 6 c.

²⁸ S. T. I-II, q. 109, a. 2, ad. 2; II-II, q. 133, a. 1 c.

²⁹ 1 d. 42, q. 2, a. 1, obj. 3.

³⁰ 3 d. 12, q. 2, a. 1, ad. 2.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² 1 d. 42, q. 2, a. 1, ad. 4.

³³ 2 d. 7, q. 1, a. 1, ad. 4.

Nothing proves more conclusively that the power to sin does not pertain to the essence of liberty than that sin decreases liberty. Each choice of evil creates a propensity towards repetition. Since man is inclined to good by force of natural inclination of his rational nature, and inasmuch as evil is contrary to that very nature, true and ennobling freedom is freedom from evil.⁸⁴ That is true liberty which makes choice conform to reason. The impotence to choose evil spells the triumph of true liberty for it spells the perfection of personality. Hence the paradox, to impede one from evil is not to deprive him of liberty but to save him from slavery. If to impede an attempt to suicide does not deprive the man of his freedom how can a frustration of moral evil, sin under any guise, deprive one of his freedom? True liberty cannot exist without truth, goodness and reason because whatever is opposed to truth, goodness or reason is opposed to liberty because opposed to happiness. The power to subvert the harmony of ends in the moral order is no more a perfection than is the power to subvert the ordered harmony of first principles in the intellectual order.⁸⁵ Intellectual licentiousness is no more reprehensible than volitional licentiousness. To do evil is no more a perfection worthy of admiration than a contest between two men trying to decide who can be least humane.

Human liberty is ordered to happiness as to its final end and this consists not in material things but in union with God.⁸⁶ Herein lies the high excellence and noble destiny of human liberty not because it is the greatest good in itself, but it is the highest good in man's possession because by means of it man can achieve all other goods, greater than liberty, even the Supreme Good.⁸⁷ Accordingly, there are three basic errors relative to human liberty: the error of those who maintain that man cannot sin, he can only do good necessarily; the opposite error of those who maintain that man can do no good, everything he does is necessarily evil; and a third error aimed at eliminating the first two: that man has the power to do any and every good, nothing is above his power. Al-

⁸⁴ S. T. II-II, q. 183, a. 4.

⁸⁵ S. T. I, q. 62, a. 8, ad. 3.

⁸⁶ C. G. III, c. 85.

⁸⁷ S. T. II-II, q. 104, a. 3.

three errors are totally destructive of human liberty.³⁸ These historical errors pointed out by St. Thomas epitomize the major modern errors relative to human liberty, the false optimism of Liberalistic Individualism and the false pessimism of Materialistic Communism. It is the basic tenet of false Liberalism that man in the exercise of his liberty can do no evil and that he is equal to the performance of *any* good by himself and independently of God, an error that is responsible for the ravages of modern secularism. It is not less the basic tenet of Totalitarianism that man is so corrupt that he can do only evil and therefore is in need of a dictator or party elite to compel him to do good as conceived by the infallible wisdom of the leader.

And Christian, true, liberty? It is the freedom to realize one's destiny by fulfillment of personality but in the unique way, the rational way, by pursuing that good which is most conducive to the attainment of the final end. Such a course, the maintenance of the order of reason, enhances liberty essentially, but curtails it accidentally by disciplining it. It enhances essential liberty for as St. Augustine says: "Happy is the necessity which compels to better things,"³⁹ since it fulfills the purpose for which God conferred it upon man. Actually man desires to be happy first of all, and free only because freedom can bring him happiness. To maintain that freedom is absolutely desirable for itself alone even though it brings misery is ridiculous. By restricting the exercise of liberty towards evil one does not lose any positive perfection but actually fills the lack produced by privation, just as liberty is not restricted when the cultivation of ignorance and superstition is restricted. Liberty has no meaning or value outside of order, and specifically, the freedom to sin, which is destructive of order. That which is an essential condition for an action does not constitute the end for which that action is produced just as a tool is not the end for which an action is performed even though without that tool the action may not be produced.⁴⁰ The essence of liberty consists in the power of choice to do good for, in relation

³⁸ 2 d. 28, q. 1 c; d. 23, q. 1, a. 1 c.

³⁹ S. T. II-II, q. 88, a. 4, ad. 1.

⁴⁰ 2 d. 38, q. 1, a. 1, ad. 5.

to the supreme end it constitutes an instrument in order that man may realize the natural inclination of his being to complete itself in goodness.⁴¹ Without the essential ordination to the ultimate end, which is achieved only by means of true good, liberty becomes a power run wild and a perverted masquerade. The perversion of liberty follows upon the perversion of the final end. The final end is perverted when the individual makes himself an absolute by exalting his ego to the foremost position in the universe.

But what is good for the individual is good for the State. If there are no restraints upon man's individual expansion, no law above his law, no truth beyond his truth, no control beyond polite self-control, then why should the State recognize any objective rules of restraint? Why should it even show the least deference to the law of the individual will? If the individual is the ultimate conceiver of his own liberty what is to prevent the State from being the ultimate conceiver of its own liberty in the form of its authority? If the power to do evil is of the essence of individual liberty, why not of the State? Once the individual has destroyed all moral basis for liberty why complain when the State refuses to recognize any such moral basis in the exercise of its authority? If liberty, in essence and nature, depends upon human opinion alone and not upon objective moral law as grounded in nature, what is to prevent the State from establishing organs of propaganda for the purpose of "educating" individuals into a "new opinion" on liberty, a liberty that finds its ultimate expression in the absolute will of the State? If there is freedom to sin for the individual, such freedom cannot be denied the State; and while the individual has been deeply engrossed in establishing a false freedom by destroying the knowledge of the natural moral law, he has only himself to blame if he finds his personal "absolute" liberty metamorphosed into "absolute" authority. Such an attitude towards liberty is like unto that of a citizen who did his best to undermine the local police department because of its restrictions on his reckless driving only to find himself overwhelmed by the criminal underworld once the police force had been immobilized. Anyone, then, upholding his right to absolute

⁴¹ *De Ver.* q. 22, a. 7 c.

liberty to the point of sinning because he does not recognize any such "taboo" eventually finds himself defenseless in the presence of highly efficient police methods of the State which has as little respect for the moral law as he has. Such a libertarian cannot even appeal to his humanity in the face of the police-state, simply because it is a part of humanity itself. What is humanity if there is not natural moral law to give it its sacred and inviolable character? By advocating the freedom to sin as essential to his liberty the individual has already repudiated his humanity. Nor can he appeal to the sacredness of his personality because without natural moral law there is nothing sacred. Personality is negated by wrong-doing, why therefore appeal to it against the wrong-doing of the State? The State adopts the scientific, methodic attitude of the individualist, that there is nothing wrong about wrong-doing and proceeds to wrong the individualist. Not content with the only true freedom, the freedom from sin, the liberal finds himself victimized by that self-same freedom to sin when the Totalitarian State proceeds to exercise that freedom.

SPECIES OF LIBERTY

When modern man discusses liberty he has in mind the intellectual, social, political and economic liberties of western civilization. The emphasis is not upon the essential and natural human liberty that is the property and prerogative of human nature, and which is derived from the laws of its innermost being. Rather, the emphasis is placed upon the particularized expression of essential human liberty; on "liberties" which are subject to the vicissitudes of time, place, custom, region and fashions in education, modified by peace, war, economics and politics, ill-will and good-will, the sufferance of majority opinion or generosity of government. This is the result of the deplorable practice and inconstancy of the modern mind in divorcing accidental manifestations of a natural power from the substantial reality and in fragmentizing fields of human activity. This fragmentation of an essential property of human nature seems to parallel the fragmentation of particularized sciences in opposition to the unifying power of metaphysics.

Such division of liberty into particular liberties is useful but not factual in the sense that liberties are separate powers. Liberty

is one, neither more nor less. If it is divisible into political, civil, religious and economic liberties, this is not because there is a "political man," an "economic man," "citizen," etc. It is simply the implication of the natural faculty which men possess of exercising their radical liberty according to just laws in the political, civil, religious and economic realms of human activity. Liberty is not denominated so much by the activity in question as by the object upon which human activity centers. That object, again, is denominated, not by any specific phase of human activity, but by its relation to an absolute good, for the object of human liberty is good and something is good by reason of its relation to the ultimate good. Liberty is not desirable for itself but for the good it can bring and the happiness it promotes. Wherever the sphere of human activity is more basic to the immediate essential welfare of the individual person it is thereby more important. The immediate welfare is temporal. This must be measured by the eternal welfare of the individual just as all human temporal activity must be measured by its eternal consequences.

Human liberty thus far studied, is the essential liberty which constitutes an essential property of human nature and which serves as the most noble and efficient means at Man's disposal to fulfill his essential purpose and complete the potentialities of his being. This essential liberty cannot be affected substantially by any extrinsic forces or factors. It may be influenced in its outward, external and terminal expression⁴² but its substance is inviolable, it admits of no greater or lesser degree, and the right of human nature can never be taken away without destroying that nature. A man is not free because of his performances or qualifications, his developments and accomplishments. He is free because of what he is, namely, a person. That freedom has been given him together with his essential nature and his substantial being from the Hand of God. This is the freedom that ever asserts itself in the face of any fashionable ideology and ever exists as long as man is man and God is God. When speaking therefore of essential liberty there is no such thing as earning one's freedom, or losing or gaining it, or granting it by any State, any more than one can

⁴² *De Ver.* q. 24, a. 1, ad. 1.

speaking of earning, losing, gaining, or being granted his human nature.

The substance of human liberty, as distinct from formula and from its accidental expression remains forever unaffected by human vicissitudes, historical, academic, intellectual, scientific, political, social, economic or evolutionary. Its sacred and immutable character cannot be ascribed to the endeavors and dedication of liberals of any era or shade. Man had that liberty from the day of creation and he will always have the strong desire to assert it, for the desire to be free is the desire to achieve one's final goal. The removal of obstructing dams does not make a river, nor does the removal of humanly contrived and imposed obstruction constitute the birth of freedom. One may re-discover it but never create it. Essential liberty is indestructible and immutable because spiritual, and spiritual because rooted in what is the best in man, his reason. Forces of materialism and atheism in all ages have sought to curb it and stifle it, to mould and channel it but this substantial self-regulating power succeeds to assert itself and surmount itself.

The modern age boasts of having alone appreciated the true character of liberty. In truth, however, having hardly ever recognized the spiritual character and force of that liberty and its indestructible matrix, the human soul, it is not aware of its substance but only of its accidental, phenomenological manifestations because it is unaware of its ontological root, cause and purpose. It knows not the substance but the mere shadow of liberty, a shadow which it interprets in terms of platitudes, axioms, clichés and stupidly blasphemous hypostatizations such as "the goddess of liberty." While it boasts of progress in freedom in its outward, accidental expressions, it has failed to arrive anywhere with it or by means of it because it has failed to realize what it is for. Liberty is not man-made; if it were, it should have disappeared from the face of the earth with the stone-age. Now and then a large section of the total area of liberty has been constricted or even suppressed by the success of anti-spiritual, anti-personalist forces, but the essential liberty remained unaffected to rise afresh and revitalized over the skeletons of periodic tyranny whether it be of scientific, psychological, biological, or political determinism. The best proof that it is spiritual is the fact that it exists today

as strong as ever, in spite of the frequent total war waged against the spirit. Slavery succeeds whenever and wherever the negation of spiritual values succeeds and wherever God is denied.

While God determined human nature to a definite ultimate end, He has also endowed that nature with the powers to achieve that end, which constitutes man's supreme happiness. This end can be attained only by personal activity. Essential liberty is the efficient, and the only adequate, means of producing personal activity which can fulfill destiny. The process of self-development and self-perfection entails a free choice of diverse goods which promote the well-being of man as a whole. These goods are not of equal value if for no other reason than that there are many facets to human nature not all of equal value. Obviously, some goods are essential to the perfection of human personality, other goods are accidentally required for that perfection. Some goods promote personal perfection directly, while others do so indirectly by contributing to the perfection of the essential goods. Essential human liberty has for its proper object the pursuit of all goods, directly or indirectly, essentially or accidentally, required for self-perfection. Though one, immutable and generic in itself, essential human liberty becomes diversified when directed to particular goods. Each particularization of human liberty as outwardly expressed, when centered upon a particular good is associated with that particular good and denominated by it.

Human liberties then, are correctly distinguished according to the hierarchy of goods and ends inasmuch as some are essential, others accidental, to the essential goal of man. Hence the first division of human liberty is into liberty as it is connected directly or indirectly with man's supreme good. As the infinite good is the reason and cause for the goodness that is in particular, temporal goods, so the essential liberty is the reason and cause of all particular liberties. Again, the essential relation that obtains between natural human liberty and the infinite good, is reflected, and participated in, by the particular liberties in their relation to particular goods. Thus the value of a particular good determines the value of a particular liberty just as the value of essential human liberty is measured by the value of the supreme good. As the infinite good is particularized by participation into spiritual, moral

and physical goods, so too, essential human liberty is particularized into liberty for spiritual, moral and physical goods. Further, as the goods of the spiritual, moral and physical realms are further particularized into the lesser realms of society, politics, economics, arts, sciences, etc., so too we have a corresponding particularization of essential human liberty.

Thus a man needs virtue because it is essential to the achievement of his ultimate goal. He therefore has not only the freedom to cultivate virtue and be free from any determination to vice, but he also has the freedom for all that is essential to the cultivation of virtue, or at least to that which would render the cultivation of virtue difficult if it were lacking, e.g. material goods. His need for human society, which is essential because virtue is essential, endows him with the freedom to establish a familial society, to educate his children, etc. His freedom to social living is again the title for his liberty respecting the amenities of social life, friendship, knowledge, moral training, fame, free speech, reputation, leisure, recreation, the freedom to assemble peacefully with his neighbors, to communicate his ideas and acquire them, in a word, all those things without which social life is rendered impossible or difficult.⁴³

The hierarchy of goods essential or useful to man embraces the entire range of goods from the spiritual realm to the material, each with its distinctive and proper value, one subordinated to and serving the other, the goods of inferior nature procured for the benefit of the superior and measured by it. Thus too the inferior expression of liberty is ordered to the perfection of the superior expression of liberty, e.g. the freedom to own and use property is measured by the freedom to moral perfection and this in turn by the freedom to spiritual development. All such goods to which man is inclined correspond to his various native powers, which, notwithstanding their unity effected by a single vital principle of human nature, still legitimately require separate satisfaction. The powers of intellect and will in man are supreme, the sensitive is

⁴³ S. T. II-II, q. 23, a. 1; *Op.* 19, c. 5; recreation: II-II, q. 168, a. 2; speech: *De Rege et Regno*, I, c. 1; II, c. 4; C. G. III, c. 147; knowledge: 4 d. 33, q. 2, a. 1 c.; S. T. I-II, q. 105, a. 1; C. G. III, 78; *In Pol.* III, 14; S. T. II-II, q. 60, a. 4 c.; q. 47, a. 10, ad. 2.

subordinated to these spiritual powers, the vegetative in turn, to the sensitive. The human liberties that correspond to the particular goods which answer the need of each natural power are therefore hierarchized in exactly the same way as these faculties.⁴⁴

Liberties then are moral powers, or rather manifestations of the one radical moral power, to pursue a good with relative immunity. This moral power all persons must respect. It is through the exercise of such liberties that a man completes and develops his personality for they are mere terminal applications of his essential personal activity as participated divine causality. This respect must be greater the more basic are the freedoms. This, again, is determined by the necessary character of the goods needed for personal development. These liberties, considered in themselves, do not possess absolute value. Their value is participated from the value of essential liberty ordered to the final end of man. The liberties are as valuable as the particular goods to which they are ordered. But particular goods do not constitute absolute values. Their value derives from being ordered to the infinite good. This is not only a matter of fact, but a matter of intent as well, i.e. these goods must be so considered and so pursued as essentially ordered to the infinite good. Here we have the sufficient reason why some particular liberties are not immutable and indestructible in themselves simply because the particular goods towards which they are ordered do not possess these essential characteristics.

Here too we have the source of all the confusion that plagues the modern mind which attempts to determine what is an essential freedom and what is accidental and relative. Not having any metaphysical realities upon which to base its speculations about human liberties, it often upholds that as an essential and inalienable freedom which is not such but merely derives its value from a truly essential liberty. So shallow is its basis for some particular liberties that when modern sophists undermine the foundation of a misconceived "essential" freedom

⁴⁴ Cfr. Smith, Ignatius, O.P., *Classification of Desires in St. Thomas and in Modern Sociology*, Washington, D. C., Catholic University of America Press, 1927, p. 27.

they find themselves without support for the truly inalienable liberties. Thus for example, when they attribute identical value to the freedom to establish a family as they do to the freedom to change jobs, they find themselves unable to defend the freedom to establish a family when the freedom to change jobs is shown to be relative, as in time of war.

Only the essential liberty of human nature is indestructible, immutable and absolute, at least in the sense that it is ordered to the absolute value, the infinite good. The particular expressions of that essential liberty, again, human liberties popularly conceived, are relative to essential liberty. The more essential is a good of particular liberty, the more essential is that liberty. The crux of the problem lies, therefore, in the nature of the goods which serve as objects of the essential human liberty. The more removed a particular liberty is from the essential character of substantial liberty, (which is determined by the necessary ordination of a particular good to the infinite good) the more variable it is. Because the farther removed a particular good is from the absolute good the more easily can a man dispense with it. Only such particular liberties merit the title of inalienable whose goods are so intimately connected with the supreme good that to impede them would be to jeopardize the essential purpose of substantial human liberty. In essence, a man is always free as long as his natural tendency to the ultimate goal is free. Thus when that freedom is threatened, grievous injury is done to man. This does not mean however, that any individual may coerce or unduly restrict another in the exercise of a particular non-essential freedom, even the least. All men are by nature equal. The only legitimate interference with particular liberties that is justifiable is that employed by proper legitimate authority under just cause, with the provision that such restriction eventually redounds to the good of the person.⁴⁵ The more essential is a good to the welfare of the person the greater is his immunity to pursue, acquire and enjoy that good and therefore, the greater is the injustice when that freedom is unduly restricted.

While all personal liberties are sacred and inviolable to the de-

⁴⁵ S. T. II-II, q. 90, a. 1 c.

gree that they are essential to personal self-perfection, this does not mean that their exercise is unlimited and that no one can do wrong in exercising his freedom in the pursuit of good even allowing that this pursuit will not interfere with the freedom of his equals. To respect the freedom of his equals is but one aspect of a man's moral activity. He is no less obliged to respect the common good of society, and above all, the rights of God. One can still be guilty of a perverted use of means, i.e. liberty, even though he does not injure his fellowmen with the exercise of his freedom. The perversion is so much the more flagrant when the means are elevated to the dignity of an end, i.e. the exercise of liberty for the sake of liberty. A vicious use of liberty perverts the harmony of ends and can never lead to the acquisition of the ultimate end which is the whole purpose of liberty. The means, in this case liberty, do not determine the end; rather, the end determines the means and *their use*.

LIBERTY AND LICENSE

License is the abuse or misuse of God-given natural liberty. If, as St. Thomas holds, virtue is but the good use of liberty⁴⁶ then vice is nothing else but the misuse or abuse of liberty. License is therefore vice and we have license when we have sin, whenever the use of liberty does not conform to right reason, which is tantamount to saying that it does not conform with the ultimate end. Inasmuch as the conformity of essential human liberty to the natural end is regulated by law in all its phases as natural, positive and personal conscience, abuse of liberty is concomitant with a transgression of law in any one or all of its phases for that is licit which is prohibited by no law.⁴⁷

License is variously manifested but its most obvious expression is through inordinate self-love which is the cause of an immoderate pursuit of goods especially of goods at variance with the final end. Just as sane, moderate, well-ordered self-love is included in every virtue because every virtuous man loves his own proper good, so immoderate, disordered self-love is included in every

⁴⁶ S. T. I-II, q. 55, a. 1, ad. 2.

⁴⁷ 4 d. 15, q. 2, a. 4, qq. 2 c.

vice.⁴⁸ From selfishness proceeds all inordinate cupidity⁴⁹ which is the source of the entire gamut of abuses of personal liberty. Where there is cupidity there is sheer wilfulness and that much lack of reason in personal activity. The inherent human desire for self-fulfillment is not impeccable. It is vicious when it does not conform to the virtuous mean and this in two ways: not only in relation to the legitimate aspirations of the self-love of others, which is incidental, but also in relation to man himself as when liberty is exercised to the interest of sensitive nature to the detriment of rational nature.⁵⁰

The problem of liberty and license is actually the philosophy of virtue and vice. The whole essence of license consists in vicious free choice. Such an exercise of liberty is essentially disordered because a secondary, relative good is preferred to a primary, absolute good and this equals to choosing evil. Everything that ought to be measured and regulated by another thing derives its goodness from being measured and regulated and conformable to its rule and measure. Evil consists precisely in not being measured and regulated.⁵¹ And what constitutes the rule and measure of things human? Reason and divine law.⁵² The guilt that follows upon the abuse of liberty does not consist so much in the failure to attend to the rule of reason and divine law, as it consists more precisely in the exercise of liberty when regulation and measure is not present and not possessed.⁵³ The Creator who endowed man with will and liberty, and set this power in motion and maintains it in motion also gives it its principal direction, one to be followed freely along the course determined by moral law. Only by discerning and obeying the laws of being in an instrument—in this case, liberty—can one make it the adequate means to a necessary end, i.e. final happiness.⁵⁴ Human liberty is the principal means to acquire destiny. In willing the good in conformity with

⁴⁸ S. T. II-II, q. 125, a. 2 c.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ S. T. II-II, q. 25, a. 7 c.

⁵¹ *De Malo*, I, 3.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ *De Reg. Prin.*, I, c. 1.

law man wills his own perfection which is freedom. That is the only good and true willing which wills true self-perfection. The measure in which the individual person tends to, or possesses, goodness is the measure of that person's liberty. Liberty should not be used to sin freely, but used to refrain from sinning. That will is free which is pious, that man is free who is a slave of justice.⁵⁵

On no other point is the modern mind as confused as on the

⁵⁵ *In Joan*. VIII, 34. Inherently vicious, therefore, is the opinion that "liberty has priority over virtue" which is defended in an editorial by Life, the national weekly magazine (November 10, 1947). According to the writer of this editorial the opinion that virtue has priority over liberty is of European origin. The American spirit, best exemplified in Methodism, stands for the priority of liberty over virtue: it is better to do wrong but freely rather than have someone compel one to do good. Actually, absolute priority belongs to the final end. It is the end by virtue of which everything else is an end and has value. It is the supreme good by virtue of which everything else is good. Virtue is desirable because it effects union with this ultimate good. Liberty is desirable and sacred because it controls the acquisition of virtue. The question of priority is unintelligible unless it is posited between virtue and the supreme good, between liberty and the supreme good. Both virtue and liberty are mere means to the attainment of the final end. There can be no true liberty without virtue, and virtue is impossible without liberty. If in spite of all this, there still may be a doubt as to which of the two has priority, obviously priority belongs to virtue since it is nothing else but the good use of liberty.

Liberty without virtue would make man inferior to the brute. Every criminal, by definition, exercises his freedom to the detriment of virtue. Do not the difficult times in which we live offer proof enough that liberty without virtue results in chaos, insecurity, mistrust and universal human misery by way of war? Assert the priority of liberty over virtue and what distinction can be drawn between liberty and license? Or between liberty and extreme selfishness? No true liberty is possible without self-sacrifice and discipline. But how are self-sacrifice and self-discipline possible without virtue?

If liberty is more important than virtue then why decry the evils prevalent in the world today since the wrong being perpetrated the world over is perpetrated *freely*? In fact, what is evil if liberty has priority over virtue? Is not the power of will expressed in aggression or in racial discrimination or in economic exploitation a manifestation of liberty without the restraint of virtue? By what norm do the victors of World War II judge the abuse of freedom on the part of the defeated aggressor nations? To maintain the priority of liberty over virtue is to maintain that liberty is independent of good will. How have good will without virtue?

distinction between liberty and license. This is in line with the general character of its misconceptions as when it divorces function from purpose. Sex is divorced from its essential purpose; science is divorced from its purpose; thus, too, art, and finally, the cause of all, the divorce of liberty from essential purpose. On the other hand, Totalitarianism destroys folly with folly. For the Totalitarian everything exists inexorably for purpose, but an earth-bound, de-personalizing purpose, the finality of the herd. While the license of Liberalism consists in the denial of divine authority, in the establishment of every man as a law unto himself, the mastermind of his own ethical system, the absolute principle of obligation and sanction; Totalitarianism destroys license by destroying liberty, or more accurately, denies license to the masses and adopts it as the unique and exclusive prerogative of the leader. For the Liberal there is no law except that what each man chooses as law; for the Totalitarian there is no law except that which the leader conceives and dictates according to the exigencies of the "class." For the Liberal nothing is licentious except when it harms neighbor; for the Totalitarian everything is licentious unless permitted. For the Liberal nothing can be worse than the loss of individual liberty, even the liberty to commit sin; for the Totalitarian nothing can be worse than unauthorized action following from personal responsibility. Neither the Individualist of today nor the Totalitarian actually divorces liberty from purpose, truth and goodness. Their license consists in the establishment of their peculiar conception of purpose, truth and law at complete variance with absolute Purpose, Truth and Goodness. For the Individualist he is himself the purpose, truth and law; for the Totalitarian the collectivity of class, race or state is truth, purpose and law.

According to the Christian concept of liberty, it cannot be divorced from Truth, Purpose and Law. The essential and conflicting difference between the three philosophies comes to light at this point. It lies in the very concept of what truly constitutes the true, the purpose and the law of liberty. For the Christian philosopher truth is an aspect of being which is but a participation of Absolute Being. When we insist that liberty is to serve truth, we mean that it is to serve the true nature of being which

consists precisely in its absolute dependence upon Absolute Being. When we maintain that freedom must serve as a means to a purpose we understand by purpose the ordering of a being to the Absolute Being as to its proper essential end, for only in its essential dependence upon the First Being and union with it does liberty have any meaning, dignity and value. When we maintain that liberty must be regulated by law we mean the Eternal Law, or Divine Reason, as manifested in the universe.

License is the irresponsible use of liberty. In general, responsibility consists in this that certain acts with their consequences can be imputed to anyone who exercises them because he is true cause of these acts, i.e. intelligent and free. Without liberty there can be no moral responsibility, and conversely, without responsibility there can be no true liberty. It is by the power of choice that man is master of his acts, but by that very same power he is liable for his act. From the moral point of view liberty and responsibility are indissolubly united. On the other hand irresponsibility and license go together. A licentious man does not possess mastery over his acts in the sense that his volition is not a rational volition which conforms with the dictates of his rational nature. To the degree that an individual is irresponsible he is not free but licentious.

LIBERTY AND SLAVERY

Slavery, as an institution, has existed in all periods of human history and, no less, in this enlightened age. If one were to abscond the noble platitudes and boastful claims and promises of modern humanitarians from the harsh reality of slavery as practiced today the difference is but one in name. There is no true liberty where human personality is not recognized, and specifically, not recognized as a participation in Divine Personality. Conceived in any other way, personality cannot withstand the onslaughts of anti-personalist forces. Calling a man free will not make him free as long as his personal dignity is not acknowledged. Materialistic evolutionism, so dominant today, can offer no support for the dignity of person. The slavery that has been attributed to the serfdom of the Middle Ages was far less a harsh reality than

the disguised servitude of today imposed on the working class, not to mention political slavery.⁵⁶

At first glance, it would seem that St. Thomas approved of slavery. Actually however, he no more approved of it than did the Catholic Church, whose teachings he most ably expounded. History attests to the fact that the Church was ever the greatest enemy of slavery, and the only *organized* enemy of slavery in principle and practice. Human personality conceived as a participation in Divine person, a rigid teaching of the Church, is opposed to slavery. That the Church tolerated an economic and social condition that smacked of slavery is no more proof of its approval than the slow, groping progress of the United Nations Organization is proof that people do not want peace. The Church did not invent slavery, nor did it protect it, rather it strove constantly to eradicate a pagan practice that had been in vogue for centuries. The practice of slavery was per se odious to the mind and will of the Church. No thinker reflected the mind of the Church more faithfully or forcefully than St. Thomas. The problem of slavery then, must be distinguished into the practice of slavery and the philosophy of slavery. We are concerned with the mind of St. Thomas on the philosophy of slavery.

For Aquinas slavery was always an evil. The question however, remained, what kind of evil was it? Intrinsic and primary or extrinsic and secondary? A slavery that negated the dignity of human personality could never be acceptable to him. This was more true of St. Thomas than of most ardent modern humanitarians who inveigh against the chains of the body but condone the chains of the spirit. Hence a distinction must be made between absolute slavery which was a complete negation of the value of the human person and of the immortal soul; and a moderate form of limited corporal servitude which at all times respects the fundamental rights of sacrosanct personality. Three factors seemed to have influenced him to tolerate serfdom as a lesser evil: there was first of all the economic condition of his day; then the fact that

⁵⁶ Cathrein, V., *Philosophia Moralis*, Herder: St. Louis, Par. 543; *Dictionnaire De Theologie Catholique*, Paris, Libraire Letouzey et Ane, 1939, vol. 5, col. 500 sq.

Aristotle approved slavery; and finally, there is the peculiar legislation of the Old Testament which he cites from Deuteronomy: whatever the slave possessed, even his person, was in a certain sense the master's possession.⁵⁷

As to the first factor, tolerance of an evil in order to avoid a greater evil, this is a recognized principle of moral science and not peculiar to St. Thomas alone. We today tolerate an enslavement of whole peoples in order to avoid the greater evil of a catastrophic war, hoping the while that a mutual understanding will resolve the problem. This is not cold-blooded expediency but the exercise of Christian patience until circumstances become more favorable to unswerving allegiance to principles.⁵⁸

One single principle that best reflects the mind of St. Thomas on human liberty is the notion considered in the first chapter. Slavery is irreconcilably opposed to human dignity which does not allow a man to be used as an instrument.⁵⁹ For he is a slave who is subject to the power of another for the good of another.⁶⁰ Slavery implies the idea of a perpetual obligation in virtue of which the personal activity of one man redounds to the exclusive benefit of another, i.e. the master, who has charge of sustaining the slave. Each of these elements may be modified, e.g. the obligation can be absolute and absorb the total activity of the enslaved or only a portion of that activity; continuity of service may be complete or leave hope of eventual freedom; the master may be cruel and inhuman, violating natural and divine law, or vice versa.⁶¹ Whatever the form of slavery, perpetual or temporary, humane or

⁵⁷ S. T. I-II, q. 95, a. 4, ad. 3.

⁵⁸ "It is not evident, however, that a complete abolition of that exploitation (i.e. of the working classes) is to be sought immediately . . . a state of exploitation, even if decidedly contrary to justice, should temporarily be tolerated (at least to some extent) for the only reason that its immediate suppression would cause a great deal of harm to many persons, including the exploited ones." Simon, Yves R., *The Nature and Functions of Authority*, Aquinas Lecture, 1940, Marquette University Press, Milwaukee, p. 77, note 13.

⁵⁹ S. T. I-II, q. 1, a. 1.

⁶⁰ S. T. I, q. 96, a. 4 c.

⁶¹ *Dictionnaire de Theologie Catholique*, vol. 5, col. 504; also cfr. 4 d. 24, q. 1, a. 1, ad. 1; S. T. I, q. 96, a. 4.

barbaric, it is opposed to liberty in varied degree.⁶² It is opposed to what St. Thomas called the greatest gift under God⁶³ by means of which man may acquire all goods to which his nature inclines him. Instrumentality and human liberty are mutually exclusive. For this reason slavery is something to be avoided for its own sake.⁶⁴ Every man naturally flees from slavery as he naturally flees from any other evil,⁶⁵ since it impedes the good of one's powers. Slavery is misery. The will necessarily and naturally avoids misery.⁶⁶

If this is true why is slavery possible at all? Because of the actuality of sin and the weakened condition of human nature due to sin. There are two kinds of mastership exercised by person over person: that of master over slave and that of superior over subject. Before the Fall the former would never have existed.⁶⁷ The subjection of slavery is unnatural because every man is *causa sui*, he exists for his own good, and each man desires his own good. Slavery is a source of misery since a man is saddened when his good falls to the lot of another. Precisely in what way is slavery adverse to nature? Slavery is contrary to the primary intention of nature not to the secondary intention of nature.⁶⁸ By virtue of the secondary intention of nature punishment follows upon sin and therefore slavery has been introduced as punishment for sin.⁶⁹ Thus too, for example, all corruption, defect and vicissitudes of old age as well as poverty are contrary to nature, but not contrary to the secondary intention of nature because what nature cannot lead to greater perfection it can still lead to lesser perfection. That this position is fully reasonable even the most zealous liberal must concede since inmates of modern prisons are not free men. If such servitude is justifiable on the ground that

⁶² *Quod.* III, q. 17 c; 4 d. 24, q. 1, a. 1, ad. 1.

⁶³ *De Ver.* q. 22, a. 9, *sed contra*.

⁶⁴ 4 d. 36, a. 1, *sed contra*.

⁶⁵ *S. T.* I-II, q. 2, a. 4, ad. 3.

⁶⁶ *De Ver.* q. 24, a. 13, ad. 10.

⁶⁷ *S. T.* I, q. 96, a. 4 c.

⁶⁸ 4 d. 36, a. 1, ad. 2.

⁶⁹ 4 d. 36, a. 1, ad. 2.

the criminal must expiate his crime why should not mitigated slavery be defensible as an expiation for the disorder of sin?

For this reason St. Thomas insists that slavery pertains to *jus gentium* and not to natural law in the strict sense. There is no basis whatever in nature why one man should be a slave sooner than another. The only basis is something extrinsic and adventitious to nature, e.g. utility.⁷⁰ Accordingly, slavery is a corporal condition, inasmuch as a slave is a *quasi* instrument in operation.⁷¹ A slave is, in a certain sense, an instrument of the master in those things that *supervene* nature, but as far as natural qualities are concerned all men are equal.⁷² Since it is derived from positive law it cannot be prejudicial to natural law in any way. Therefore as the slave is not subject to the master to the extent that he loses his freedom to eat and sleep, and in general to the necessities of body, so too is he free in those things without which nature cannot be preserved in species, as matrimony.⁷³ It follows that a slave does not have the obligation to obey his master in all things but only in certain things pertaining to his corporal activity, hence external only. A master cannot command everything.⁷⁴ Slavery can never prejudice natural fundamental human rights; the body may be subjected to alien mastership but never the better part, the soul.⁷⁵ In things pertaining to morality or spirit man is subject to God alone. Obedience of servitude extends merely to certain non-essential external activities of body, to servile work.⁷⁶

The kind of servitude tolerated by St. Thomas is not the harsh form of slavery commonly associated with the term. He often enumerates servitude among the relations of the domestic community. He thus distinguishes husband and wife, father and son, master and slave. On the strength of each such relation the second party constitutes a "*quasi*" something of the first part.⁷⁷ Thus

⁷⁰ S. T. II-II, q. 57, a. 3, ad. 2.

⁷¹ 4 d. 36, q. 1, a. 4 c.

⁷² *Ibid.* a. 2, ad. 1.

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴ *Ibid.* ad. 2.

⁷⁵ S. T. II-II, q. 32, a. 5.

⁷⁶ S. T. II-II, q. 32, a. 5, ad. 2; a. 6, ad. 1; q. 104, a. 5 c; ad. 2.

⁷⁷ S. T. II-II, q. 58, a. 7, ad. 3; q. 57, a. 7, ad. 3.

the relations between master and slave are no more exempt from the obligation of elemental justice than the relations of father and son.⁷⁸ For this reason St. Thomas does not consider the sexual violation of a slave as a mere offense against property but as a grave injury against personal dignity.⁷⁹ In like manner, although reception of sacred orders was unlawful, it was not invalid.⁸⁰ The slave is conceded full right to contract marriage with the person of his choice, on par with a son or daughter economically free, and this without the consent of the master and even in spite of a prohibition.⁸¹ In this regard St. Thomas admits three classes of corporal evils in contradistinction to the three classes of corporal goods: substantial integrity of body which is outraged by killing or mutilation; pleasure and quiescence of the senses outraged by pain imposed on the senses from without; movement and use of bodily members outraged by incarceration or any kind of forced detention. He sees justification for a loss of any category of corporal goods only on two grounds; either as a just punishment, or as a safeguard for the prevention of some greater evil. Add to this the voluntary subjection of oneself in exchange for material support and we have the only just titles for servitude.⁸²

In fine, the essential radical freedom common to all men because derived from their very nature, a freedom that consists in the power of self-determination in progressing along the route towards personal perfection is no less the birthright of the serf than of the freeman. The right to ultimate happiness is subject to no distinction between freeman and serf. This fundamental liberty is not infallible in its outward expression. It is subject to various impediments in its accidental manifestations such as custom, place and time. Servitude is one of such circumstances. The power of human personality to perfect itself leaves the hope for eventual eradication of servitude.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ S. T. II-II, q. 61, a. 3 c.

⁸⁰ 4 d. 25, q. 2, a. 2.

⁸¹ 4 d. 36, a. 1, ad. 1; a. 2 c; S. T. II-II, q. 104, a. 5 c; q. 32, a. 5 c.

⁸² S. T. II-II, q. 65, a. 3.

LIBERTY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Right is not synonymous with law. Law defines right and is a certain plan of right.⁸³ Objectively considered right is the formal object of justice or the thing that is owed to another because properly ordered to him as his own. Subjectively, it is the mutual relation existing between the object and the possessor of that object. Strictly defined, right is the moral power to have, hold or exact something. As a power it is distinguished from duty; as moral, it is distinguished from purely physical force. The end or aim of right is the liberty and independence of each in his own good; it is not the aim to constrain the liberty of the possessor but to protect and guarantee that liberty.⁸⁴

From one point of view the possession of a right to a good guarantees the freedom to rest secure in the possession and enjoyment of a good. From another point of view, essential natural human liberty guarantees free unimpeded exercise of rights, for one is free to do what one has a right to do.⁸⁵ There is no liberty where there is no right and no right where there is no law considered in its absolute sense. Liberty considered in its root and essence, is the native power of the will to the perfection of human personality. The use of liberty is subject to the determinations of moral law. Such determinations of law constitute rights.

It is only because man is an intelligent being subject to moral law that he has rights. Negatively, obligation is the source of rights for it is because of man's fundamental obligation to strive and achieve his final goal that he possesses the right to the necessary means.⁸⁶ The obligation to employ definite means in the prosecution of one's personal destiny clearly implies a right to use those means. The very existence of a right in one person presupposes a correlative duty in another to respect that right, otherwise rights would have no meaning or value. Thus while a right guarantees the liberty of action, duty denies another the freedom to interfere with the possessor of the right.

⁸³ *S. T. II-II*, q. 57, a. 1, ad. 2: "Aliqualis ratio juris."

⁸⁴ Cathrein, *op. cit.*, p. 211, par. 288.

⁸⁵ 4 d. 11, q. 2, a. 4, qq. 2, ad. 1.

⁸⁶ *In V Eth. lect. 12*; *S. T. II-II*, q. 57, a. 2.

Rights are natural or positive depending on whether their source is the natural moral law or positive law, human or divine, or private agreement or pact.⁸⁷ In general, that is a natural right towards which human nature is inclined.⁸⁸ Such natural rights are universally obligatory and immutable simply because human nature and natural moral law are essentially immutable. Public opinion does not make rights.⁸⁹ If it does not make them it cannot change them. What is contrary to natural law cannot become right by human legislation or popular will. Positive right, being a determination of natural right cannot be arbitrary and the product of whim.⁹⁰

What is the nature and character of the relation which exists between human liberties and human rights? The essential human liberty with which man is endowed is a natural power to be used morally in using means to happiness, along the path marked out by God. The top-level manifestation of the fundamental relation existing between man and his supreme end is the relation of human liberty as means to that end. On a somewhat lower level, this relation is expressed in the relation between man and the temporal goal of his life, virtue. On a third level, this expression of liberty is manifested in the relation of man to temporal goods which are to serve as means to the acquisition of virtue. Briefly then, man has essential liberty in order that he may procure the good things in life which would help in leading a virtuous life, the end of which is perfect happiness. The natural moral law guarantees the free pursuit of particular goods but not indiscriminate pursuit. He may not strive for a good that does not belong to him by any title. The determination of a definite good which can legitimately serve as the object of his native freedom we call a right. Liberty is thus the foundation and the motive power which will make particular goods belong to a person in fact, not by mere general title. The more essential are the goods to the perfection of person the more essential are the rights to these goods and consequently the more immunity does his freedom enjoy in the pursuit of these

⁸⁷ S. T. II-II, q. 57, a. 2; q. 60, a. 5 c.

⁸⁸ *In Eth.* Lib. V, lec. XII (Marietti Ed.), Par. 1019.

⁸⁹ S. T. I-II, q. 97, a. 1, ad. 1; II-II, q. 57, a. 2, ad. 1; ad. 2.

⁹⁰ S. T. I-II, q. 95, a. 2; II-II, q. 57, a. 2, ad. 2.

goods. The exercise of rights enjoys immunity by reason and title of the immunity which characterizes essential human liberty in its pursuit of happiness. An individual has a duty to tend toward his ultimate goal, and therefore he has a right to the means necessary for that attainment, and in this way the means become *his own*. Human rights do not make liberty but presuppose it. Rights channel liberty and pattern it by designating certain definite goods towards which liberty may incline. Man has rights because he is free and secondly because his fellow-men are free. He needs his rights to protect his liberty to well-being from the misuse of the freedom of others. Rights determine the extent, range and efficacy of human liberty in the pursuit of particular goods conducive to self-perfection. When speaking of a particular human liberty we mean the moral power of human liberty centering upon a definite good guaranteed by a definite right. Essential human liberty exercised over the good is given the name of the right exercised. There is but one liberty but exercised in its term within the limits of a moral claim or right and centering upon a definite objective, that generic freedom is characterized by the good it strives to possess. A good is essential when it is necessary to achieve the ultimate goal; a right is essential when it is a moral claim to such an essential good; a particular liberty is essential because of that essential right to a necessary good. Essential human liberty is always essential because the final goal can never be achieved without it. Human liberties designated as rights can be named in this hierarchical order; natural, positive, essential, inalienable, public, private, civil, ecclesiastical, etc. Every human being, rich or poor, free or slave, ruler or subject, possesses natural rights of which he cannot be deprived: to preserve life, to marry, rear and educate his children, to develop his intelligence, to be instructed, to hold to the truth about God and to live in society.⁹¹ All these rights designate essential goods which serve as required objects of human liberty.

⁹¹ Pius XII, Christmas Message, in *Principles for Peace*, Par. 1846; S. T. I-II, q. 94, a. 2.

HUMAN LIBERTY AND LAW

Nothing that exists is exempt from Eternal Law. All law has for its purpose to lead those falling under its jurisdiction to the proper end. The power of law that leads man to his goal is moral. Because he is free his activity must be responsible and it is responsible when guided by law, inasmuch as everything that exists for an end must be proportioned to that end.⁹² Human liberty exists for an end and therefore, must be proportioned to that end. It is inconceivable that means can lead to an end if used contrary to that end. The proportion that must obtain is one of order. Human liberty must be maintained in harmony with that order. Liberty is proportioned to order when it is proportioned to the rule of Divine Reason as manifested in natural law and in just positive laws.

Liberty is not diminished by the restrictions of law. The obligation of law in no way is opposed to liberty except in the one whose mind is averse to what is prescribed.⁹³ Moral law is not even a lesser evil comparable to an excision of a tumor as some have held. If this were true then it is evil for man to be rational for it is his rational nature which is his primary law.⁹⁴ How can that which leads one to the supreme good be evil? By subjecting himself to the regulation of law, man does not abdicate self-mastery. All activity is still *his* activity. It is man himself who after all, regulates his own liberty by regulating his activity in conformity with the law of his nature. Not every personal act is proportioned to the end. Law shows which act is proportioned to the end and which is not.⁹⁵ Law ensures the highest efficacy to liberty for it is concerned with maintaining the harmony of order. Without order liberty would be haphazard and inconstant. If law curbs freedom unduly, the implication is that liberty thrives best in disorder and chaos. True law and order, based on natural moral law and order, does not deprive man of freedom but of

⁹² S. T. I-II, q. 96, a. 1 c.

⁹³ S. T. II-II, q. 44, a. 1, ad. 2.

⁹⁴ Taparelli, L., *Saggio Teoretico di Dritto Naturale*, Roma: 1855, Par. 619.

⁹⁵ 2 d. 41, a. 1, ad. 4.

license. It determines the manner, degree and extent of human freedom in order that it may never cease to be freedom. If an absolute objective norm were lacking for the human will then each man would be a law unto himself and each man's freedom would be absolute. Law is both the pattern and the area for liberty. To exercise one's freedom is to will in conformity with the laws governing the production of an effect. No one works with wood as he would with clay or iron. If he desires to produce any effect he must accommodate himself to the laws governing the material, i.e. he must *discipline* his activity.⁹⁶ The function of liberty is to choose proper means towards the attainment of the proper goal. This function of liberty parallels closely the essential function of law which is also directed towards an end. Law is essentially purposive and liberty can no more be divorced from purpose than any other vital function. If both then, bear such an essential relationship to purpose it is inconceivable that liberty can be independent of law, especially the natural moral law.

NOTION OF LAW

Law is a rule or norm of action according to which one is induced to act or is restrained from acting. Reason is the rule of human actions since the end is the first principle of activity and it is the work of reason to order things to an end.⁹⁷ But the end of ends is the very first principle of activity, and this is beatitude. Law therefore must be primarily directed to human happiness.⁹⁸ Law is not the extrinsic principle of action in the sense that it is alien and opposed to self-determination and to personal welfare because it is identified with reason which is an intrinsic principle of activity. Man's individual reason would suffice as guide and norm of his own activity if he were alone and his activity alone mattered. But there are many individuals and many intellects, not all of equal native power, hence an additional and superior principle is required. Such is the law which manifests the demands of reason by ordering the life of an individual to a social

⁹⁶ S. T. I-II, q. 95, a. 1 c.

⁹⁷ S. T. I-II, q. 90, a. 1.

⁹⁸ Ibid, a. 2 c.

common end.⁹⁹ Laws are related to the human acts as universals to the particular.¹⁰⁰ Primarily, law is not instituted so much for the virtuous as for men of ill-will who are ever prepared to abuse their liberty.¹⁰¹ From another point of view, at the same time that law is a discipline of liberty from without, it trains the reluctant in the use of their liberty and this is especially true of inexperienced youth.¹⁰²

The primary division of law is into natural and positive. Natural law is the application of Eternal Law to rational nature. But human nature can be considered in two ways: insofar as it is purely human and insofar as it is common to man and brute.¹⁰³ Accordingly, all that pertains to natural law to which man is inclined by his nature. The primary fundamental command of rational nature is to act according to the dictates of reason, since it is reason that rules the whole man.¹⁰⁴ Everything by its very nature seeks good, hence the first principle of practical reason is based on the nature of good: to do good and avoid evil is the first law of nature.¹⁰⁵ According to the inclinations of human nature we distinguish various precepts of natural law. Man desires first the natural good of his nature as it is common to all substances; next he desires the good of nature he has in common with animals, e.g. marriage; finally he has a natural desire for the good proper to his specific nature, i.e. social life, to know the truth about God.¹⁰⁶ Every natural desire derives its substance and strength from the fundamental inclination toward the ultimate end.¹⁰⁷ The primary precepts of natural law prohibit actions which would totally defeat the purpose of a natural inclination; the secondary precepts prohibit actions that

⁹⁹ S. T. I-II, q. 90, a. 3.

¹⁰⁰ *In VI Eth. Lect. 7.*

¹⁰¹ C. G. III, c. 128.

¹⁰² S. T. I-II, q. 95, a. 1 c.

¹⁰³ S. T. I-II, q. 94, a. 3 c.

¹⁰⁴ S. T. I-II, q. 94, a. 3 c.

¹⁰⁵ S. T. I-II, q. 94, a. 2.

¹⁰⁶ S. T. I-II, q. 94, a. 2.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.* ad. 2.

would partially defeat the purpose of a natural inclination or render its fulfillment difficult.¹⁰⁸

Because of the indeterminate character of natural moral law there is need of positive law,¹⁰⁹ a competence which belongs exclusively to anyone vested with the power to legislate for the community. Such determination of natural law cannot be arbitrary and capricious, rather, it must faithfully reflect the content and spirit of natural law for the purpose of legislation is to induce men to virtue. Positive law has no validity or binding power except that which it derives from natural moral law.¹¹⁰ Positive law cannot be a true law if it disagrees in any way with the demands of natural law, otherwise it is not a determination but a corruption of law.¹¹¹ To conform to natural law positive law must be honest, just, possible, according to nature, conformed to custom of the country, suitable to place and time, necessary, useful and clear. "It is not law which makes justice but justice which makes law. It is justice which makes just laws."¹¹² The natural moral law, traditionally conceived, is by no means a man-made figment or a working hypothesis as is the belief of modern jurisprudence.

"Positivism which is the prevailing mood of modern thought generally, is also found in the special field of legal theory. In jurisprudence the positivist denies natural law, affirming the contingent and variable enactments of political communities to be the only laws there are; . . . positive law like positive science, becomes unintelligible; positive law like positive science, tends toward the dangerous extreme of being entirely conventional, entirely man-made and arbitrarily imposed."¹¹³

The proximate purpose of law is to order men in their mutual

¹⁰⁸ 4 d. 33, q. 1, a. 1 c.

¹⁰⁹ *Quod*, II, q. 8 c; 4 d. 15, q. 3, a. 2, qq. 1 c.

¹¹⁰ S. T. I-II, q. 95, a. 2 c.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹² Pius XII, Allocution Felicemente, in *Principles for Peace*, p. 478; also S. T. I-II, q. 95, a. 3.

¹¹³ Adler, M. J., "A Question About Law," in *Essays in Thomism*, N. Y. Sheed and Ward, 1942, p. 207.

relations for the common welfare. But the ulterior and more fundamental purpose of social living is the good full life, i.e. the virtuous life. Therefore the primary purpose of any human law is to make its subject good, make people virtuous.¹¹⁴ A man cannot be a good citizen if he does not lead a virtuous life. A political organization which makes this possible is itself vicious.¹¹⁵ Hence it is utterly reprehensible to conclude that a man is just and good simply because he is within the law, i.e. that his activities are *legal*. A man is good on account of the goodness of his will by means of which the goodness that is in him is turned into act. The will is rendered good by willing good. He, however, wills good the more who wills it out of love than out of fear, for that which is willed in fear is to that extent not willed.¹¹⁶ From the point of view of liberty men can be classified into four categories: those who are induced to do good spontaneously; those induced to good by others, not however, by compulsion; those who must be compelled to do good; and finally, those whom not even coercion can influence to do good. Laws are established according to this fourfold use of liberty.¹¹⁷ Law thus fosters virtue by means of a fourfold action: command, prohibition, permission and punishment.¹¹⁸

From all this it is clear that law has a constructive function in society for, if well founded, it curtails license and enhances true liberty. Essential human liberties are not the creatures of civil law. They are merely recognized and determined and protected by that law. Liberty is the principal efficient means for the realization of the final end which is directly attained by the practice of virtue. Law is essentially teleological and fosters virtue. Liberty, law and virtue therefore, have a necessary moral connection. Law cultivates virtue, liberty executes the virtuous and virtue effects union with the final goal. The value of everything is measured by the contribution it can make in uniting man to his supreme goal. The primary dispensation of law is justice and the tran-

¹¹⁴ *S. T.* I-II, q. 92, a. 1 c.

¹¹⁵ In *V Eth. lect.* 3, Par. 926.

¹¹⁶ *C. G.* III, c. 116.

¹¹⁷ In *Rom.* c. II, *lect.* 3, c. V, *lect.* 6.

¹¹⁸ *S. T.* I-II, q. 92, a. 2 c.

quillity of order,¹¹⁹ which are the best guarantee of liberty as well as the ideal condition for its growth. A juridical order which derives its validity from humanly contrived values can result in an artificial social order and promote a shallow tranquillity and a seemingly secure life for liberty but all this constitutes a mere external decorum. Such a social order is no more robust than a social life based on a rule book of etiquette fortified by police methods. That is why liberty has failed to thrive in a liberal or totalitarian type of social order. Such order divorces law from morality and if from morality, then from conscience too. There is no basis for any inalienable rights. Mere human fallible judgment, pressed by prejudice and vice and arbitrary will, decides the range, extent, validity and force of human liberty.

HUMAN LIBERTY AND AUTHORITY

Liberty is most natural to man but so is life in society. The individual is one person endowed with one generic freedom and a single ultimate goal. That same individual seeks diverse goods for a virtuous life. His personal activity is two-pronged. It aims at his private good and at the social good, which is also a good of the person.¹²⁰ The one aspect of personal activity crystallizes his relations with other free men and the ultimate goal. To make both expressions of liberty compatible with each other an external principle is needed because social activity is external. Authority is the principle with the moral power to bind the free will of men for the promotion of the common good which is the social good of individuals. God left man in the hands of his own counsels not in order that he may do as he pleases but because he is not compelled to do by natural necessity what he *ought* to do. Just as by following his free choice, guided by free judgment, he follows his own counsel, so too, in this that he obeys his superiors.¹²¹

To exercise authority means to govern i.e. to direct a thing suitably to its proper end.¹²² To govern means to conduct asso-

¹¹⁹ S. T. I-II, q. 98, a. 1 c.

¹²⁰ *De Malo*, q. 4, a. 1 c.

¹²¹ S. T. II-II, q. 104, a. 1, ad. 1.

¹²² S. T. I, q. 103, a. 1; II-II, q. 102, a. 2 c.

ciated men to a common end, not as machines or beasts are moved by force of biological or mechanical laws, but as rational beings in whom reason is the principle of specific activity. Hence the movement is by means of moral power. Any direction to a proper end must take into account the nature of the being so directed, otherwise violence is done to it. This is required by the perfect model of government, Divine Providence, which guides each creature to its ends according to its nature and condition. Social activity, like individual personal activity, is reduced to three human functions: understanding, willing and operation.¹²⁸

The end of society is the common good. Authority has for its chief purpose not the attainment of the common good itself, but the unification of individual wills to strive for the common good. *The common good is not attained by individual effort but by co-operative united effort of all individuals in a given community.* Since the nature and function of society is to protect and enforce man's right and duties, authority must secure for every man and family the full liberty compatible with the liberty of other individuals and families, with the rights of the community and rights of God. At least, it must create and maintain the conditions which will foster the greatest measure of responsible freedom and this means to uphold order and peace. The individual is capable of deliberate and free activity for his own good. But experience shows that no group of individuals is capable of a group operation that is at once deliberate and free for the good of the group. The individual's operation towards his own good has a natural unifying principle in his intellect, which is one, and the principle of execution, which is one. Since there is no collective will nor a collective mind as essential properties of a group some such unifying principle must exist. Any group activity without a rational unifying principle is inevitably reduced to the irrational activity of the mob, blind in operation and moved by impulse. There can be no activity toward a definite end unless there is knowledge of the end. But such knowledge must be one. As long as there is a disagreement of minds as to what constitutes the proper end, or the proper means to the end, there will inevitably

¹²⁸ Taparelli, *op. cit.*, Par. 1682.

be a disagreement of wills towards the common end.¹²⁴ Liberty is the great power that secures the individual good and the common good. Liberty however needs law for direction. Law again needs authority. For how are the demands of law to take effect unless there is a principle which can bind diverse and divergent wills to a single end?

The essential relationship of course, is between God and person. Liberty is not a purely human invention. It is rooted in man's nature. Neither is authority a purely human invention; its antecedents are natural. The source of liberty is God through nature and the source of authority is God through nature. Since it is the will of God that man live in society, it must also be His will that society use the means without which social life and social purpose are impossible, namely, authority.¹²⁵ Authority no less than individual liberty is regulated by the norm of Divine and natural law. It has a form of justice to observe, it cannot be arbitrary. The proper use of authority, and the proper subjection to authority promotes the most efficacious use of liberty and furthers the eventual union of person with his supreme good. The relation of individual liberty to authority is a relation of obedience to Divine Will. Since all men are by nature equal, an exercise of authority without divine sanction would be a violent imposition on personality, resulting in its enslavement. Inasmuch however, as obedience to authority is obedience to Divine Will by way of natural law, true human dignity is enhanced for it is not subjection of man to man for the good of another, but submission to Divine sovereignty for the completion and perfection of the human person.¹²⁶

Subjection to authority can assume two basic forms: men may be subject to authority so that their whole personality is subservient to complete domination, as in tyranny; and this is contrary to human dignity for it constitutes the slavery whereby man is reduced to the role of instrument or means to serve the exclusive good of the one in authority. Secondly, men may be subject

¹²⁴ *De Reg. Prin.* I, c. 1.

¹²⁵ 4 d. 24, q. 1, a. 2 c; S. T. I-II, q. 90, a. 3; *De Reg. Prin.* I, c. 2.

¹²⁶ S. T. II-II, q. 104, a. 1.

so that their various activities are directed and regulated for their own proper good in the way that both the welfare of the individual and the welfare of the social whole are advanced.¹²⁷ Thus the function of authority is not purely negative and merely protective. It is above all a constructive force since it supplies the deficiencies of man's nature in the acquisition of the common social good which man could not enjoy by individual effort.

The individual's life is essentially free but it must be ordered. A disordered life is an anarchic life and therefore irrational. The individual always remains free to shape and mould his own existence but on condition it is always in harmony with his social existence. There is no real conflict in the individual between his individual and social life and therefore there need be no conflict between individual and social activity. The individual is no more free to flout and condemn the demands of social living than he is to be inhuman. He can be just as inhuman by being anti-social as he can by being anti-self. He is no more free to deny the influence of legitimate authority upon himself than he is to deny the authority of his rational nature upon his individual activity. For what his individual reason is to his individual activity that is what authority is to his social activity. If there is antipathy, it exists not between individual reasoned will and the reasoned will of authority but between individual reason influenced by passion and the reason of authority. In its true and proper sense authority looks to the good of an individual as he is a part of the social whole.

The only tried and true means of reaching the happy mean of balance between liberty and the legitimate demands of authority is virtue, not merely on the part of the subject but also on the part of the exercising authority. What is really repugnant about authority is violence. Nature recoils from violence as from evil. The greater the admixture of violence in the use of authority the more discontent does it engender among subjects with a consequent loss of voluntary cooperation for social welfare. The function of authority then, consists in a positive and negative role: positive in that it must strive to coordinate the spontaneous

¹²⁷ S. T. I, q. 96, a. 4 c; 2 d. 44, a. 3.

activity of individuals towards the common purpose; negatively by frustrating the ill-will of those who would either selfishly set their own welfare at the expense of the commonweal or by infringing upon the liberties of others.¹²⁸ It must not only unite the free spontaneous activity of individuals but keep it free and spontaneous and this calls for respect of personal rights. The common good does not grow at the expense of genuine private good. If it does it ceases to be the common good of the members and becomes the good of a select exploiting group or of a fiction such as the hypostatized state. In either case it is tyranny since it promotes the corruption of the common good.¹²⁹ The conclusion is inescapable that the basis of society is the moral order; that the force, validity, sanction and binding power of authority is derived from the moral order. The idea of order binds every intellect because order is truth; it binds every will because order is good. Society is inconceivable without the idea of duty that binds one to work for the good of the whole under the direction of authority.¹³⁰

That kind of authority therefore is most efficacious and in harmony with the destiny of human liberty which achieves its end by spontaneous activity of its subjects, for, what is more spontaneous is more natural than the obligatory, and this in turn, more natural than the constrained.¹³¹ Moreover, authority ought to be as flexible in its exercise as law in its application for it ought to possess the same essential qualities as law. It must be just, possible, honest, in agreement with nature, custom, conform to person, time and circumstance.¹³²

LIMITATIONS OF AUTHORITY

The power of authority is not absolute for the obvious reason that society is not an absolute end in itself. Social life constitutes but one essential phase of personal activity. It is the person who is destined for union with the one absolute end, the supreme good.

¹²⁸ S. T. I-II, q. 96, a. 1.

¹²⁹ S. T. II-II, q. 42, a. 2; *De Reg. Princ.* I, c. 6.

¹³⁰ Taparelli, *op. cit.*, Par. 341.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, Par. 1061, 632.

¹³² *Ibid.* Par. 1082, 826.

It is through personal activity that that end is achieved. Inasmuch as social activity is not the whole of personal activity the demands of the common good cannot absorb the whole of personal activity. Essential segments of freedom are due to other activities of personal self-perfection. "Neither the individual nor social life taken alone can constitute the virtuous life and the whole of happiness. If authority is conceived as reasoned will—and it cannot be anything else without a denial of human personality—which activates social life it can in no way be detrimental to personal will without the risk of frustrating the essential purpose of man: While it is concerned primarily and immediately with the practical order and temporal welfare, it may never lose sight of the superior will, the Divine Will, ordering all to itself."¹⁸⁸ No one can usurp the prerogatives of person either for his own benefit or for that of a State to the exclusion of God's rights. The demands of society are legitimate only if the rights of God are respected, because to the absolute disposition of Divine Will all other willing is subject, individual and social, at the risk of being disordered and criminal. This is the primary and most fundamental limitation of any human authority. The essence of the problem concerning the relation between liberty and authority is ultimately reduced to a definition of the relationship between human authority and the Divine Will, and human liberty and Divine Will. Ascertain that relationship and the problem is half solved.

The fundamental responsibility of authority is the perfection of human personality on the temporal level. Obviously, such perfection is not advanced by stifling or reducing personal initiative but by expanding and protecting it as much as possible with due respect to the exigencies of the common welfare. It is not empowered by natural law to *control* personal activity but to direct, guide and channel it. If rigid control of personal activity were of Divine intent, that control would have been instituted by reducing the power of freedom at its source. Man is free to rule himself, and authority exists to facilitate and encourage self-direction and not inject itself into the process of personal perfection. Self-

¹⁸⁸ S. T. I-II, q. 21, a. 4, ad. 3: "Totum quod homo est, et quod potest et habet ordinandum est ad Deum."

control is the best control among free men. Direction of personal activity pertains to authority but its execution pertains to the individual person.¹⁸⁴ Such execution is self-direction. The function of direction is best achieved by authority when it refrains as far as possible from execution, for to direct does not mean to drive. It implies a knowledge of ends and means and the efficient methods to be presented to the reason of a free agent with a consequent assent of the will. Command presupposes a thing worthy of obedience, and also in its way, does prohibition. Authority is thus bound to the dictates of right reason not less than the will of the individual man.

While authority is empowered to make known its will by legislation it is never above law. The essential characteristics which make laws good by conforming them to the natural moral law presuppose that authority is endowed with such qualities.¹⁸⁵ Its power to direct by command, prohibition, permission is determined by what is just, possible, honest, etc. It forfeits its right to existence when contrary to the dictates of the natural moral law. In this connection, the particular form of civil society, the fundamental law of the land, the constitutional law if rightfully established and sanctioned by natural law, are all legitimate limits of authority.

Free human personal activity of the individual, on both the private and public level, is primarily moral and only subordinately political, economical and societal. The essential moral character of human activity must be recognized by authority. While a part of society the individual is also above it by virtue of his essential ordination to the final end. This excludes the total absorption of the individual by the State and limits the power of authority over him.¹⁸⁶ If it is contrary to the order of reason for an individual not to fulfill his obligations deriving from his essential relationship to the final end, it is equally reprehensible for con-

¹⁸⁴ S. T. II-II, q. 50, a. 1, ad. 1: "dirigere magis pertinet ad regem, exequi ad subditos."

¹⁸⁵ *De Reg. Prin.* IV, c. 16; III, c. 11; I, c. 3; S. T. I-II, q. 94, a. 2; 4; 5.

¹⁸⁶ S. T. I-II, q. 21, a. 4, ad. 3: "homo non ordinatur ad communitatem politicam secundum se totum et secundum omnia sua. . ."

stituted authority to impede a man in the fulfillment of his duties bearing directly or indirectly on his final end.¹³⁷ The State, it is true, is a perfect society with its proper end and the right to the necessary means, but it is not the only society. In the spiritual realm the Church is also a perfect society with its own end and the right to the means toward that end. Therefore too, there is the domestic society which, although not perfect and complete, is nevertheless more fundamental and prior to the State and enjoys the fundamental right which the State cannot violate.¹³⁸

Inasmuch as the final end rules all other ends, all functional activity should start from the person and, to the extent that this activity needs to be supplemented, recourse must be taken according to a hierarchized social order, from the local community upward.¹³⁹ Every social function is best achieved by that society to whose nature this function belongs.¹⁴⁰

An authority which, under the guise of promoting the common welfare, infringes upon the essential personal liberties of its subjects is transgressing its proper limits, for there can be no common good where these liberties are not respected. The command of

¹³⁷ C. G. III, c. 117.

¹³⁸ Leo XIII, *Rerum Novarum*, in *Five Great Encyclicals*: New York: The Paulist Press, p. 6.

¹³⁹ C. G. III, c. 71: "Optimum in gubernatione est ut rebus gubernatis secundum modum suum providentur in hoc enim regiminis iustitia consistit."

¹⁴⁰ S. T. II-II, q. 183, a. 2, ad. 3: "Natura non coarctat ad unum quod multa requirantur." ; I-II, q. 105, a. 2: "... Est autem duplex communicatio hominum ad invicem, una quidem quae fit auctoritate principum; alia autem quae fit propria voluntate privatorum personarum. Et quia voluntate uniuscujusque disponi potest quod ejus est . . ."; Pius XII, *La Solennita della Pentecoste*, in *Principles for Peace*, p. 724, "To safeguard the inviolable sphere of the rights of the human person and to facilitate the fulfillment of his duties should be the essential office of every public authority. . . . Hence it follows that the care of the common good does not imply a power so extensive over the members of the community that in virtue of it the public authority can interfere with the evolution of that activity . . . determine at will the manner of his physical, spiritual, religious and moral movement in opposition to the personal duties or rights of man." ; Pius XI: "... it is an injustice, a grave evil and a disturbance of right order for a larger and higher organization to arrogate to itself functions which can be performed efficiently by smaller and lower bodies." *Quadragesimo Anno*, in *Great Encyclicals*; New York, the Paulist Press, p. 147.

authority imposes duties upon its subjects. There are two kinds of duties: those to be fulfilled by the individual person and those borne by the group.¹⁴¹ The competence of authority extends primarily and *per se* to the duties that pertain to group action, and only secondarily and *per accidens* to personal duties when the neglect of these affects the public welfare. The individual is obliged to obey human authority only in those things which are performed externally by the body, excepting that which pertains directly to nature, in which case he is subject only to God.¹⁴² The development of person is more important than the development of State. Only authority thus conceived is derived from God and does not take away from man's freedom.¹⁴³

To attain a happy medium in relationship between authority and liberty a good and just government will observe the following rules:¹⁴⁴ 1° Procure the maximum of security with a minimum of constraint. If a diminution of a minor liberty results merely in a good that is already guaranteed by the social order and personal initiative then such diminution is a genuine evil especially if it is compensated merely by participation in the good normally procurable. An unnecessary diminution of liberty cannot be compensated for that is an unnecessary diminution of liberty without which the same good is obtainable. Only necessary diminution of liberty is justifiable, all other curtailment of freedom is an evil and therefore unlawful for authority which must be ordered to good primarily not evil.

2° The good that is to be procured through the action of authority must be superior in itself, and in its attendant circumstances, to the good that is being lost in the process, e.g. if to protect me from the danger of fire, I am deprived of its use and thus forced to use uncooked food and to suffer cold, I am subjected to a certain evil to prevent an uncertain and merely probable evil. Provisions of probable force must be applied to prevent probable evils.

3° A social end demands social *public* activity for its realization. Non-public activity does not directly influence the accom-

¹⁴¹ S. T. II-II, q. 152, a. 2, ad. 1.

¹⁴² S. T. II-II, q. 104, a. 5 c.

¹⁴³ 2 d. 44, q. 2, a. 2, ad. 1.

¹⁴⁴ Taparelli, *op. cit.*, Par. 851 sq.

plishment of a social purpose. Hence it is unlawful for authority to require the use of private property for a social purpose. That is public activity which produces a common effect.

4° Public authority may, in extraordinary cases and by means of extraordinary ordinance, intervene in a private society to correct an evil provided that the ability and intention are lacking on the part of private authority.

5° Public authority may not intervene in private affairs unless there is a definite indication that this intervention is called for. An evil that does not transpire externally is not a threat to public welfare. Authority has no right to intervene in a private realm unless for the purpose of obtaining a public good. A private evil restricted to the domestic circle not adversely affecting the public welfare, is not within the competence of public authority which cannot correct what it does not know and cannot know what is not made manifest. To intervene would give rise to a greater evil than the one it seeks to correct.¹⁴⁶ The unity of a private society, especially that of a home, is a moral unity. The highest authority is obligated to will the good, guard this unity and impede disorder.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁶ S. T. I-II, q. 95, a. 2, ad. 4: "domus est tutissimum uniuscujusque receptaculum, unde molestum homini est ut in domo sua invadatur. . . ."

¹⁴⁸ Taparelli, *op. cit.*, Par. 706.

CHAPTER V

SURVEY OF CONTEMPORARY NON-SCHOLASTIC THOUGHT ON LIBERTY

The delicate balance that obtains between true human liberty and the natural moral law can be easily disturbed by the slightest misconception, defective or excessive. The ultimate expression of liberty in politics is nationalism; as concerns the individual it is anarchism; in economics it is Laissez-faire; in religion it is secularism; philosophically it is expressed as individualism; by way of reaction there is imperialism on the one hand, socialism and communism on the other; as a concrete program it appears as Democracy, Sovietism, Fascism, Naziism, etc.

Whatever form error on liberty may assume, this much is certain: how one thinks about human liberty determines its social expression. Theory of liberty will find expression in exaggerated liberty or, license, or in exaggerated control of liberty or, tyranny. The epistemological root of misconceived liberty is manifold. The following is an accurate statement of confusion ruling modern thought:

"It may be suggested that the decline of liberalism—loss of faith in reform—is perhaps a symptom of modern society's loss of faith in general. Modern man in his 'quest for certainty' has relied upon religion, science, reason, 'progress,' economic 'laws,' absolutism in philosophy and logic—only to see these supports swept away one by one. The recent vogue of semantics tends to destroy even the prop of language. The loss of faith in the rationality of man undermines faith in the democratic process.

There has undoubtedly been a connection between mass disillusionment and cynicism on the one hand, and the rise of fascism on the other. Even the certainty of servi-

tude may sometime appear preferable to intellectual and moral chaos.”¹

To this far from complete diagnosis of the modern mind one ought to add that man has tried everything of his *own making* except humble submission to the natural moral law. That he has succeeded in abolishing his “supports” is merely an indication that what is man-made can be un-made, that what is built on sand, shifts with the sand. Having set up his own straw-men why should he be disconcerted by the discovery that he is able to sweep them aside?

The foregoing chapters established the general principles of a Christian philosophy on human liberty, principles which not only serve as rules for conduct in the practical order of liberty, but not less in the speculative order. These principles offer a norm by means of which the validity of contemporary thought on liberty may be ascertained. Truth is one or manifold, objective or subjective. If manifold and subjective then there is no reason to deplore the infringement upon, and alienization of, human dignity and personal liberty for obviously, if one opinion on liberty is as good as another then one condition of liberty is as good as another. According to the subjectivism rampant in the world today the philosophy of liberty of the individualist is as true as that of the totalitarian.

Obviously, the range of ideas concerning human liberty extends from all to nothing, from a liberty that serves no superior purpose to a total slavery that serves no superior purpose. The crucial and essential points which any philosophy must take into account, by admission or omission, are the following:

1. The essential dependence of man upon God;
2. The natural moral law that expresses that dependence;
3. The nature of man and the essential purpose of his existence;
4. The essential means for the realization of purpose, freedom and intelligence;

¹ Carlton C. Rodee, “American Capitalism and Constitutionalism,” in *20th Century Political Thought*, Ed. by J. S. Roucek, New York, Philosophical Library, 1946, p. 404.

5. The nature of human liberty as an actuating principle of that essential purpose;

6. The nature and purpose of the two principal realms of human freedom, private and social life.

Deny, ignore, or misconstrue, any one of these essentials and the result is not mere speculative error, but, in the practical order, the very negation of human happiness. Moreover there is no solid ground upon which to base human liberty, nothing to ensure its sacred character and no recourse when that liberty is threatened. Liberty can be threatened in two ways: by abuse and, as an inevitable reaction to this, by repression. One and the other constitutes serious error which is bound, like all serious error, to cause unhappiness among men. There is no escape. Either human liberty is grounded upon absolute Truth, Goodness and Purpose, which are indestructible and constitute the sublime destiny of liberty, or truth and goodness and purpose may be what they may seem to be to anyone. But then, liberty too, is merely what it may seem to anyone. If one can validly ask what is truth, and not stay for an answer, then one can also validly ask what is liberty, and not stay for an answer. Only one may awake to find his liberty sabotaged, and himself one of the saboteurs, because he has failed to understand the true nature of liberty which is but a failure consequent upon the general failure to acknowledge Truth, Goodness and Purpose.

If the roots of liberty can be traced to the biological alone, or the economical alone, or the political alone, or the historical alone; if one of these positions is as true and good as another then there remain but two choices for Man: to be enslaved to biological antecedents or to a ruthless tyranny of materialistic Communism. If one and the other slavery is repugnant to men of good will they have no other alternative but to trace the roots of their liberty to the spiritual, and not merely trace, but to maintain them there and protect them there. If man is but a glorified and glamorized brute, who did not have liberty at one time, but has it now, he can also do without it now. What is so sacred about biological development that would make human liberty sacred? Can one protest that the loss of liberty is contrary to human dignity? What

dignity? It is contrary to human personality? What is a "person" biologically? Can one protest that liberty is sacred? If so, why then is not the appetitive power of the brute sacred? Unless one would concede that the biological antecedents of the brute are less biological than man's. If economics is the basis of human liberty, is not material security as important to the brute as it is to man? If man is but a highly developed, and no more than, animal; if his spiritual powers are no more than mere evolutionary refinements of animal powers without roots in the spiritual realm, what is so reprehensible about a philosophy such as Communism when it readily admits this "truth" and proceeds accordingly to treat men as animals and deprive them of their liberty? If man is not *totally* subject to God why should he not be totally subject to a dictator or to a man-made absolute? If he is not subject to the natural moral law, why should he not be subject to purely human law even to the detriment of his liberty?

In considering non-scholastic thought on the nature and purpose of liberty one meets with hopeless confusion which revolves not merely about the concept of liberty itself, but more fundamentally, about concepts essentially related to, and essentially presupposing, liberty. Without its essential antecedents, human liberty is unintelligible. It obviously does not exist by itself and in itself. It must subsist in a subject as a quality of that subject. How it is possible to have a true concept of human liberty without a true concept of man is utterly incomprehensible. It is inconceivable how man, who is generally conceived in non-scholastic circles as being a highly-developed brute, should be the exclusive subject of such a noble quality as liberty and the brute should be categorically denied this prerogative. Liberty thus, is unintelligible without the correlative and antecedent concept of human nature, which, again, is impossible without a true concept of the exact relations that exist between man and man, man and society, man and the whole universe, and man and God. These concepts are so intimately and inextricably intertwined that it is intellectual suicide to divorce one from the other, something which can be done anyway only by violence. Irrationalism, however, is nothing hideous nowadays, for it has even been elevated to the questionable dignity of a philosophical system quite popular among non-scholastics.

Not a few historians of human thought have come to realize the hopelessness of the task confronting them when they attempt to classify thinkers on any important philosophical question. Either one examines the thought of each thinker individually, a stupendous task; or he avails himself of a sweeping, uncompromising division of all social theorists in two opposing camps granted the existence of the golden mean. There is no alternative but to accept the latter solution. Actually, the problem is not so much one of distinguishing who is *for* or *against* liberty. It is far more fundamental. If human liberty were the most fundamental reality and value in the universe, such a distinction would suffice. It is far from being the most fundamental reality so much so, that even though the solution of the problem of liberty alone were attainable, the evils that torture mankind would hardly be affected by that solution. It would compare to the discovery that fire burns, a discovery which has not prevented many homes from burning down. The problem of human liberty is but a superficial manifestation of a far profounder problem so that views held about the foundations of liberty profoundly affect the very concept of human liberty. The problem is not *for* or *against* liberty; not even *for* or *against* human dignity; the fundamental problem of the universe today is "For or against God." "This once more is the alternative that shall decide the destinies of all mankind in *politics*, in *finance*, in *morals*, in the *sciences and arts*; in the *State*, in the *civil* and *domestic society*."² Liberty itself does not offer the greatest problem. If men do not agree about the nature and purpose of man, his relationship to God, they will never agree on the purpose and nature of liberty.

It is not necessary, in fact wholly inadequate, to consider anyone's opinion strictly on liberty alone. It is incomparably more important, and sufficient, to consider one's opinion of human nature and man's relation to God. Who will seriously consider a man's opinion on soil-conservation if that man believes that the only purpose for soil is to walk on? How give serious consideration to a man's opinion on human liberty if he believes that the

² Caritate Christi Compulsi, an address by Pius XI, in *Principles for Peace*, p. 460.

purpose of man does not differ essentially from the life-purpose of the brute? We do not attribute liberty to brutes, then why to man if his purpose is virtually identified with the purpose of the brute? If a brute can be content without liberty why not man? If there is no truly rational appetite in man how can there be liberty; inasmuch as a brute has no rational appetite it too should be free. To conceive man without transcendent purpose is to postulate man without liberty simply because for purely animal purpose he needs no liberty. To conceive man without his essential relationship to his Creator is to conceive him without any but a brute purpose, hence liberty is but a fiction. But if a fiction, then neither Individualism, Fascism nor Communism should offer any difficulties. For if man's purpose is no higher than that of the brute, and no more transcendent than his appetite for food, then any one or all of those "isms" can fulfill that purpose. Subjected to the violence that is Communism, Fascism, Nazism and Individualism man will be treated no worse than the brute animal with whom he shares an identical purpose.

Truly then, the problem of liberty is at bottom the problem of "for or against God." Without God there is no need or use for liberty whatsoever. Man can well dispense with it. Without God there really is no problem of humanity or inhumanity, democracy or tyranny, brotherhood or anti-fraternalism, justice or injustice, peace or war, education or ignorance. Without God, man can survive any one of the antihuman "isms," or, if he does not survive it, what is the difference? His earthly purpose has been fulfilled whether he lives 10, 20 or 50 years.

NATURALISM

In the extent of its influence and the number of adherents, one destructive and all-pervasive attitude that has gripped the modern mind, and is the root cause of so many social evils and the modern failure to solve its pressing problems, is Naturalism. Greater than its guilt for having established norms and principles for human living which have been so productive of great man-made evils is its guilt in refusing to acknowledge its past errors and make amends. Far from making a humble confession of guilt the adherents of naturalism maintain that if they have failed it is

because of an insufficiently ruthless and adequate application of its destructive principles. If there is evil in the world, it is due not to too much naturalism, but not enough of it.

Naturalism is not so much a coordinated system of philosophy as it is a coordinated attitude of mind and an unconscious conspiracy. Once the mind is conditioned by naturalism crystallized theories proceed from the mental attitude as branches sprouting from the one trunk of a tree. The various philosophical theories thus proceeding from such a mental attitude are far from being in agreement; they may often be hostile to one another. All manifestations of naturalism, however, agree on one point: to disagree with any manifestation of the supernatural in thought, word or deed. The various and divergent philosophical solutions proceeding from the naturalistically inclined mind run the gamut of radicalism: Materialism, Positivism, Liberalism and Communism are all mothered by naturalism. While it is true that not every naturalist is an Individualist or a Communist, it is true, however, that every Individualist or Communist is a naturalist.

Regardless of its peculiar manifestation in any given realm of human activity all those can be safely consigned to the intellectual camp of naturalism who exclude God from human activity and human institutions. Its popular expression is known as secularism. In the light of the Pope's classic battle-cry, "For God or against God," dividing the intellectuals of the world into two opposing camps, the human race is faced with the fateful choice between allegiance to the depravity of naturalism or the salvation through allegiance to God. Once this distinction is made there follows automatically a subscription to either a true or a totally false notion of man, his nature, his purpose and consequently, his liberty. Naturalism in all its phases hostilely contradicts every major thesis of the Christian position on liberty and every fundamental value of Christian philosophy. Naturalism allows, in fact encourages, any disagreement among philosophers in their views on life, and demands their disagreement with any position favoring the supernatural. Any hypothesis is valid except one which would take into account the supernatural.³ Naturalism is that type of

³ Baldwin, James M., *Dictionary of Philosophy and Psychology*, New York: Macmillan Co., 1902, pp. 137-38.

philosophy which restricts the whole of reality to Nature; what as yet has not been discovered is also purely natural.⁴ It is the "doctrine that separates nature from God, subordinates the spirit to matter; and sets up unchangeable laws as supreme."⁵ Nature alone and exclusively possesses and offers all the solutions to every and any human problem; it alone is the source of all human perfection, a perfection that cannot be sought beyond its borders. The unique method by means of which this perfection can be participated is the scientific method.⁶ Naturalism gives rise to three distinct attempts to solve the problem of man's place in the universe: Materialism, Evolutionism and Positivism.

Prof. Hocking maintains that contemporary naturalism is often disguised as a highly technical type of philosophy and he lists among its principal proponents: Bertrand Russel, George Santayana, R. W. Sellars, John Dewey, Irwin Edman, B. M. Moore, and John B. Watson.⁷ The thought of one representative exponent of naturalism in this country will suffice to characterize the trend and show the fundamental tenets, especially when he is considered to be the most influential and widely read in America, Professor John Dewey. Before proceeding with such an examination it is important to note that the American Constitution, which is the best political expression of human liberty in the modern world, is essentially based on the idea of inalienable personal rights conferred by the Creator and sanctioned by Divine Will, as manifested in a transcendent natural moral law.⁸ The basic tenets of naturalism are therefore opposed to American democracy.

Evolutionism is the basis of John Dewey's thought. Man possesses no soul, mind, or reason in the traditional and spiritual sense

⁴ Hocking, W. E., *Types of Philosophy*, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929, p. 43.

⁵ Ward, James, *Naturalism and Agnosticism*, New York: Macmillan Co., 1899, I, p. 186.

⁶ Martin, Everett, D., *The Conflict of the Individual and the Mass in the Modern World*, New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1932, pp. 71-72.

⁷ Hocking, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

⁸ Ives, Moss, "St. Thomas Aquinas and the Constitution," in *Thought*, Vol. XII, Dec. 1937, no. 4, pp. 567 sq.

of these terms.⁹ Dewey rejects God, at least as a personal Infinite Being; the progress of culture and science has completely discredited the supernatural; human destiny is not controlled by God.¹⁰ There is no moral law, no final end.¹¹ Hence, there is no Infinite Good that obligates the human will, no happiness except the earthly and temporal. The only moral end for man is an abundant life.¹² The true and the good is variable, ever changing, whatever is useful.¹³ The perfection of personality is ill-conceived if by it is meant the development of a subsistent being towards a definite, transcendent purpose, realizable by spiritual growth. Any development is confined to the present; "The future, just as future lacks urgency and body. To get ready for something one knows not what or why is to throw away the leverage that exists and to seek for motive power in a vague chance."¹⁴ There is no goal outside of man that would mark a definite term of completion: "The conception that growth and progress are just approximations to a final unchanging goal is the last infirmity of the mind in its transition from a static to a dynamic understanding of life."¹⁵

Progress for the sake of progress, development for the sake of development, continual and without a definite purpose, that is the terminus of human activity. Self-perfection and the realization of personality patterned after a Divine archetype and guided by eternal moral law must be discarded because it constitutes a principle of authority that negates individuality and represses correct freedom. Freedom is not an essential property of human nature rooted in a rational will, the existence of which he denies, rather: "Regarding freedom the important thing to bear in mind is that it designates a mental attitude rather than external unconstraint

⁹ *Democracy and Education*, N. Y. Macmillan Co., 1933, pp. 391-393; p. 344; p. 153.

¹⁰ *A Common Faith*, New Haven, Yale U. Press, 1934, p. 23.

¹¹ *Reconstruction in Philosophy*, N. Y. Henry Holt and Co., 1920, p. 161 sq.

¹² *Democracy and Education*, *op. cit.*, p. 415.

¹³ *Reconstruction in Philosophy*, *op. cit.*, pp. 156-57.

¹⁴ *Democracy and Education*, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 66.

of movements but that this quality of mind cannot develop without a fair leeway of movements in exploration, experimentation, application, etc.”¹⁶ Obviously, there is little nobility or dignity in such a concept of freedom; it is hardly more than the expression of an irrational appetite, and purely subjective, inasmuch as it is a mental attitude. This freedom is not designed to serve human personality in its striving for completion; it is an expression of sheer voluntarism without the admission of a willing faculty. It is uncontrolled movement not self-mastered and self-directed activity toward a higher purpose; a movement that has value and meaning only in the social reorganization and function.¹⁷ “True individualism is a product of the relaxation of the grip of authority and customs and traditions as standards of belief.”¹⁸ Hence, there is no room for true ethical development, no life of virtue because there is no immortality and no immortality because there is no substantial, indestructible personality.

Personality is not substantial nor self-subsisting but a mere interaction between the human organism and its environment.¹⁹ Since such an interaction exists between an animal organism and its environment why should not personality be attributed to the brute? But if to the brute what is particularly sacred about human liberty? If human personality is but the growth of an individual human organism in its social environment what is to prevent that personality from being totally absorbed into a communistic social structure, i.e., a biological organic whole? Naturalism is thus utterly helpless to withstand totalitarian dynamism. It is a question whether that intellectual helplessness in the face of communistic ideology is a matter of design or a mere coincidence of two irrationalistic, antihuman ideologies. The dialectical Materialism of Communism offers the greatest threat not only to the world in general but particularly to the American way of life. What defense can the philosophy of Dewey and other naturalists

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 357.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 340.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 356.

¹⁹ *Experience and Nature*, New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1929, Chapter VII.

offer to withstand the onslaught upon American institutions? ²⁰

Certain statements of Dewey's are startlingly similar to Communist social philosophy the basic tenet of which is that an individual finds meaning and destiny in the social organism. Thus, "What one is as a person is what one is as associated with others in a free give and take of intercourse." ²¹ There is no distinction between the individual and society; the single person as the "real person" is no longer either a physical body or a rational substance but merely an aspect of the social organism. ²² This is totalitarianism pure and simple, a blue print for the total absorption of an individual person into an absolute, hypostatized collectivity. Far from offering any hope of resistance to the totalitarian negation of the value and dignity of the individual, naturalism invites totalitarianism and paves the way for the destruction of self-expressive and self-determining personality. Society is the content, measure and goal of personal activity. Individual and social activity, Dewey contends, are not two aspects of a superior moral order, rather, the only moral conduct is social conduct. ²³ Virtue is not a personal and permanent quality pertaining to an individual. It is the product of social life, ²⁴ and, apparently, does not exist outside of social life. No man is a good citizen, says St. Thomas, unless he is good himself. But for Dewey social life is the measure of a man's goodness. ²⁵ The only values in life are social values and these are achieved through knowledge con-

²⁰ In discussing the wisdom of a proposed bill seeking to outlaw the Communist Party, George Sokolsky makes the following comment in his column: "Such a bill as this will not keep Marxians out of the universities. For instance, what effect would it have upon the gentle, professorial scientist who teaches that man is a product of his environment, his attitudes conditioned by his means of earning a livelihood; that therefore there is no moral basis for action, only a struggle for existence or survival?"

"Chew that one to a pulp and it can undermine our civilization more effectively than the atom bomb can explode it."—(*These Days*, Washington Times-Herald, February 20, 1948.)

²¹ *Democracy and Education*, *op. cit.*, p. 143.

²² *Philosophy and Civilization*, New York: Minton, Balch, and Co., 1931, p. 159.

²³ *Democracy and Education*, p. 414.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 417.

nected with the system of impulses and habits.²⁶ Such a social process is not subject to any superior moral norms outside the regulative principle contained and found within that process itself. To impose moral obligations and control on such activity, says Dewey, is to coerce intelligence. Inasmuch as there are no ends or values in the teleological sense there is no infinite good that can impose itself on social activity, the only worth-while activity, according to Dewey. The social and the ultimate end of life are identical.

Enough of Dewey's views have been presented to show how destructive they are to a Christian social order and to a philosophy of liberty. The common good of society is the social organism itself; the end of human life is society; the source of any personal obligations and hence of morality, is society; freedom is not an essential means for the ultimate completion of the supreme value, subsisting person, rather it is but a mental attitude directed towards harnessing and controlling individual activity with a view to perfection to be achieved by total service to society. If naturalists do not subscribe to Marxian collectivism explicitly it is not necessary for them to do so, for the conclusion is inevitable that ruthless, brutal, collectivism is the life and purpose of man. Society is god, education for society is religion; social action is virtue, the welfare of society constitutes the happiness of the individual. The model of individual perfection and development is found in the bee and ant. There we have the full realization of social organization; there too we have the fulfillment of the individual capacity for societal living which the naturalists extol; there too we find that the dignity of each ant and each bee is the dignity of the heap and the hive; there we have satisfaction through social service; the regulative principles which control the social process are found exactly within the process itself. Materialistic totalitarianism could not have hoped for a better precursor than the philosophy of naturalism. The intellectual ground has been well broken and fertilized to receive the seeds of destructive Communism.

While every naturalistically inclined thinker is not necessarily

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 413.

and *ex professo* inclined to totalitarianism (why not remains a mystery particularly if a naturalist is sincere and consistent in his beliefs) every naturalist is by definition atheistic. Such Atheism may be manifested in a peculiar philosophy of life other than the totalitarian. Thus, echoing the naturalism of Dewey are many sociologists and social philosophers. They categorically negate the basis for inalienable and sacred personality and its fundamental right to self-completion. How they can do this and at the same time voice their belief in the dignity of the individual and the sacred character of his liberty is incomprehensible. One can only say that the naturalistic social theorists pay cynical lip service to democracy and the American conception of freedom, or, they are intellectually dishonest by resorting to dialectical Marxism in the use of double-meaning and double-dealing ideas like democracy, liberty, equality, fraternity, personality, etc. They pretend to be defenders of the democratic way of life the while they undermine the very spiritual basis which makes democracy at all conceivable, intelligible and practicable and, without which it is a shamelessly cruel sham and deceit.

Following the same procedure, we present the views of a representative materialistic sociologist noting that all of like persuasion agree mutually in denying the fundamental Christian theses. One such sociologist with a naturalistic bias is Henry Pratt Fairchild.²⁷

According to Fairchild the human being is but a more highly developed animal not essentially distinguishable from the brute in intellect or rational appetite. Even the mind is totally animal in its origin. Free will is a myth disproved by science. Society is a higher development of animal gregariousness and a mere device for satisfying human interests i.e. desires which are purely material and earthy. Human personality is not self-subsistent and not a subject of any inalienable rights. These are the products of society. Man receives his rights from society, the only proper subject of rights. The family serves a restricted purpose always subject to the dictates of society. The only purpose of society is

²⁷ *Foundation of Social Life*, New York: Wiley and Sons, 1927; *People: The Quantity and Quality of Population*, New York, Henry Holt and Co., 1939.

its improvement which is above all physical and is implemented by science, especially that of eugenics.

Since society is composed of animals the improvement of the breed is to be promoted either in a positive manner, or if feasible, in a negative way by means of birth-control and sterilization. (One is inclined to ask what objection if any, could Fairchild have had against the Nazi program of like dimensions?) Man's happiness is the total aim of life but this happiness consists in purely animal satisfaction. Pain and pleasure motivate human activity and voluntariness is measured by the desire for physical satisfaction. The only control of human activity is derived from purely physical natural laws. The only progress for human life consists in increasing animal comfort. When society offers satisfaction, it fulfills its purpose. Since human activity is reflex action in response to stimuli, to speak of essential human liberty with a view towards a transcendent goal that would perfect human personality is unintelligible.

Inasmuch as this concept of human nature and of society and the purpose of each is so profoundly false there is no point to even speak of a genuine human liberty and the sacredness of human personality. But why men of Fairchild's persuasion should object, if they would, if a ruthless Collectivism such as Communism should take him at his word and proceed to treat men, according to that theory, like brutes is not less unintelligible. Obviously if this is the "scientific truth" then any resistance to a Communistic social order is unreasonable. Either man is not a brute and therefore cannot be treated as one, or he is essentially a brute, and then what is evil about treating him as one? That there are an estimated fifteen million unfortunates concentrated in forced-labor camps against their will should hardly offer any reason for our disapproval; such enslavement can be defended according to Fairchild's theory e.g. it is the scientific method of improving the race, or, it helps to fulfill the purpose of society. If even compulsory birth-control and other eugenic measures may be employed by society to improve the race why not such means as slow starvation employed by the Russians to promote the collective welfare at the expense of the Ukrainians? This social theory can offer a

"scientific" apology for Nazi gas-chambers for the Nazis were exceedingly zealous in promoting the purity of race.

Although these social theorists claim allegiance to different schools of thought, the differences between the various schools are superficial and accidental and would hardly affect their fundamental attitude towards man and his happiness. The difference is reduced to a mere choice of means advocated to implement the kind of social life these men have in mind. The majority agree in the basic tenets of naturalism, curiously enough, the basic tenets of Marxian Communism: man is no more than an animal; God is a myth as are the related concepts of moral law, the soul, human personality, essential human freedom with a destiny transcending earthly life. There is but an accidental difference between the social philosophy of Fairchild and the following: George Lundberg, Stuart A. Rice, W. I. Thomas, Howard W. Odum, R. D. McKenzie, Robert E. Park, Ernest W. Burgess, William McDougal, Floyd Henry Allport and many others.²⁸ Materialism and Evolutionism is the warp and woof of their social theory with each author adding his own accidental frills.

The most obvious single defect in their theory is that it offers no intellectual ground which could serve as a solid support for any opposition to militant Communism. Their philosophy offers not a single valid argument against the enslavement of man by a super-state or the total absorption of the individual into a monstrous inhuman animal society. They can only question the measure of efficiency with which totalitarianism endeavors to implement this inhuman social theory. The ultimate purpose of society and of human life does not differ one iota from the purpose and program as conceived by materialistic and atheistic Communism. And, if it is merely a question of the proper scientific techniques to be used in the realization of that societal purpose, the Marxians claim no less an infallibility in the use of scientific means than these naturalistic social theorists. The objection that Communist social engineering is too ruthless and violent is by no means a violent objection against the inherent viciousness and

²⁸ Snell, Roberta, Sr. M., *The Nature of Man in St. Thomas Aquinas Compared with the Nature of Man in American Sociology*, Washington, D. C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1942.

inhumanity inherent in the Communistic social program if for no other reason than that these experimenters in human happiness have destroyed the very meaning of viciousness and inhumanity. The viciousness and inhumanity of Communism do not consist in its *sudden* and *violent* overthrow of the existing Christian social order, but in destroying what is true and good and substituting what is evil and false. The way in which this substitution is effected does not alter the vicious character of that substitution itself. Slavery does not cease to be slavery only because the naturalistic "process of social integration" is gradual and painless instead of sudden and painful. The evil is not in the pain and discomfort caused—although this is the only kind of evil they admit—but in the complete degradation and enslavement of the human person.

Whether the means employed to implement such a social order is education of the human animal in concentration camps or in schools does not change the character of that slavery. What can be vicious and inhuman to a mind that conceives the essential purpose of man to consist in the satisfaction of animal pleasures and the escape of physical pain and, simultaneously insists that this purpose is totally subordinated to the supreme purpose of society which consists in the highest possible *animal* development? What can be "too violent" about Communist social integration once the greatest violence has already been done to human nature by reducing it to the level of sensate organic life? After having deprived the individual of his inherent rights and prerogatives and shackled him to the absolute of societal welfare what can be just or unjust? In this theory man has been injured and degraded so much that he is incapable of suffering further injury and disgrace because the very basis of his immunity from injury and disgrace has been destroyed, because the very meaning of injury and disgrace has been obliterated. If no injury can be done to one who is willing, can any injury be done to one who is not even capable of willing? Or who cannot will apart from society? The basic aims of atheistic, materialistic Communism find full support in the atheistic, materialistic Naturalism of these American social philosophers. There is but an accidental difference, if any, as to methods and techniques. Whether one calls it the "social or-

ganism," or the "Absolute State," or the "Race," or the "people," or the "class," or the "party," in any case, the dignity of person and human liberty find their total negation in the "social process" of naturalists.

As long as human rights and personality have been "proven" to be unscientific infirmities of medieval superstition what is to stand in the way of implementing the societal processing of individuals with a view to social amelioration? How can police methods and repressive measures of party machinery and the psychological violence of party propaganda work injustice against the societal constituents when there can be no question of justice as long as society possesses all the rights? What, after all, is reprehensible about atrocious police methods of the super-society when the individual is denuded of the very protection afforded to him by his nature as person? Shall we appeal to "humanity," in the face of police-state cruelty—a humanity that is nothing but pure animality? If this is unspeakable cruelty what is humane about the struggle for survival of the fittest? If it is unspeakable cruelty, naturalism is making it possible, fashionable and desirable. It cannot even offer a good definition for cruelty. Such social theory can justify any tyranny over man, for nothing is tyranny to an animal.

HAROLD J. LASKI

Still following the current of Naturalism but developing a peculiar philosophical social theory of his own is Prof. Harold J. Laski. Carlton C. Rodee numbers him among the "Neo-Marxist" school.²⁹ The views of Laski are set forth in his work: *Liberty in the Modern State*.³⁰ He does not concern himself with liberty as an essential property of human will and, therefore, of human nature; rather, he considers the external expression of liberty in external human activity. Accordingly, by liberty he understands, "the absence of restraint upon the existence of those social conditions which, in modern civilization, are the necessary guarantees of individual happiness."³¹ Thus restricted liberty is the human pre-

²⁹ *Op. cit.*, p. 401.

³⁰ New York: Harper Bros., 1930.

³¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 1.

rogative to seek and strive for goods which are products of social living and which can contribute to the happiness of the individual. Such liberty can be constrained by the activity of co-equals and that of political authority. Obviously, such a concept of liberty is far from complete, its range is restricted to the political and economic areas. That is the express intention. It remains to be seen, moreover, what Prof. Laski understands by "individual happiness."

The essence of liberty, he adds, is an "absence of restraint."⁸² As has been pointed out above, the absence of constraint marks the negative character of liberty. Actually however, liberty is primarily positive in character for it is self-mastery and self-direction towards complete self-fulfillment of person. According to this conception it is an inalienable and inviolable essential property of human nature.

Liberty, writes Laski further, "implies the power to expand, the choice of the individual of his own way of life without imposed prohibition from without."⁸³ Here it is important to distinguish between legitimate and proper prohibitions and improper and illegitimate prohibitions. Laski insists that every prohibition results in a diminution of freedom for, people "are unfree whenever the rules to which they have to conform compel them to conduct which they dislike and resent."⁸⁴ He overlooks the fact that liberty, in order to remain liberty, must conform to laws of its own being; that no one is free by virtue of a liberty that can cease to be liberty as when it leads to unhappiness in the objective sense. Prof. Laski admits that liberty is for happiness but ignores the fact that not every exercise of liberty is infallibly conducive to happiness for it would then be necessary to admit that happiness consists in the mere exercise of liberty. This is precisely the crux of the problem of human liberty: once it is ascertained what precisely constitutes individual happiness then the exercise of liberty, if it is to promote individual happiness, is *ipso facto* governed by laws that govern happiness. For, if any and every use of liberty should lead to happiness then there would be no justifi-

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 1.

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

cation at all for prohibition; but the moment happiness is restricted in substance and defined, liberty is accordingly restricted and defined. Not everything leads to happiness and since liberty exists for happiness it cannot be exercised indiscriminately over any object. The restraint on liberty therefore, which precludes unhappiness is determined by right prohibitions. A prohibition that promotes unhappiness—in the true sense and not a mere resentment or displeasure—is an improper prohibition. Again, a prohibition that furthers and enhances happiness is a proper, legitimate and wholesome prohibition.

All this however, hinges on Prof. Laski's conception of what constitutes the true happiness of the individual. What constitutes the goal of his "power to expand"? The truth is that the good of rational nature constitutes individual happiness. Inasmuch as happiness is the principle which imposes prohibitions on human liberty, it is the good of rational nature that imposes restraints on individual liberty. As long as happiness consists in the good of rational nature, then obviously whatever is contrary to that good cannot serve as the objective of liberty. Accordingly, the prohibition is not derived from "without" but from the inner laws of human nature; nor is it a genuine diminution of true freedom but merely an apparent one.

Prof. Laski considers authority to be the greatest threat to human liberty. "Uncontrolled power is invariably poisonous to those who possess it." "Liberty always demands a limitation of Political authority and it is never attained unless the rulers of a state can be called to account."³⁵ That political authority is open to abuse no one will seriously question; but neither can anyone deny that liberty is no less open to abuse. Liberty can offer as great a threat to constituted authority as authority to liberty. To see an inevitable and necessary tension between the two proves the unsoundness of the social theory that advances this. Prof. Laski misses an essential characteristic of both liberty and authority. One and the other is a *moral* power. He, on the other hand, conceives liberty and authority as purely physical powers. Thus his problem becomes one of counteracting a physical force—authority

³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 2-3.

—that might encroach upon the self-expression of another physical force—liberty. That precisely is the serious difficulty under which the modern mind labors. By reducing everything to Materialism, even psychology and morality, he has no course except to treat moral problems on the same level with physical problems encountered in matter.

Once, however, the essential moral character of liberty and authority is recognized, maintaining a proper balance between the two becomes a moral problem and the task of a moral force. Prof. Laski and others of the naturalistic and positivistic frame of mind seek to apply the scientific method to something that escapes that method. Physical force merely supplements moral force and is applied only in the interest of moral preponderance, but, always, the physical aspect of liberty and authority is an accidental one. The controls then, of both liberty and authority, are controls of self-restraint according to the measure and the virtue of the obligation of moral law and not purely physical laws. Rules, especially the precepts of moral law, are not necessitated by the "pressure of numbers and the diversity of desires" of the members of a community, as Prof. Laski so pitifully surmises. The precepts of the natural moral law respond to human nature. The more fundamental precepts are not external compulsions applied to human nature from without rather they are co-existent with the very powers of human nature. These moral precepts are no more extrinsic and alien to human nature than are the engineer's directions given to a new buyer of an automobile instructing him on how to operate the machine. These directions respond to the mechanical nature of that machine, they are not external compulsions applied to the machine to restrain its operation but simply rules which aim to conform its operation to its construction and to mechanical laws. Such directions do not reduce the perfection of the automobile but help to derive the best possible utility and benefit out of that machine. They do not "force" the machine, nor are they an application of violence by an alien principle. These directives simply mean that the potentialities of the machine be respected as they are when the directions are scrupulously observed. In like manner, the precepts of moral law are not actually limitations of human activity, nor on the power to expand, as

would be the case with the compulsion of physical violence. The moral law corresponds most intimately and most harmoniously to the perfection of human operation, i.e. to the potentialities of the human person. Therefore it is not true, as Prof. Laski contends, that every limitation of liberty is a limitation of the continuous expression of a man's personality.³⁶ It is precisely by conforming to the potentialities of personality by conforming to the demands of moral law that these potentialities are best realized. Moreover, much depends on what Prof. Laski understands by the "potentialities of Personality." Obviously, these can be true or false, good or vicious. Thus, the potentiality to cruelty is not a true potentiality of personality. It is the moral law which actually determines what is the potentiality of personality and what is not. Granted that a set of blue-prints are engineering masterpieces, does the fulfilling of the design limit the potentialities of the building or machine? By no means. Precisely because blue-prints are faithfully reproduced the building or machine realizes its full perfection, its potentialities. So, too, the moral law in relation to human nature and its essential operations, is the blue-print of divine origin, which, when fulfilled faithfully, enhances the perfection of that nature and its operation positively.

Unwittingly, Prof. Laski approaches the genuine concept of liberty in spite of his positivistic bias which inclines him to exalt liberty as an end in itself. He writes, "without economic security, liberty is not worth having. Men may well be free and yet remain unable to realize the purposes of freedom."³⁷ With this admission he seems to gainsay the entire defense of his main thesis. He is saying, unintentionally perforce, what the scholastics maintain positively and forcefully: that liberty is not an end in itself, but a means to a definite purpose. Where Laski errs, and grievously, is in degrading freedom to the purpose of mere economic security and related goods, in a word, he subordinates it to material welfare. It is true that liberty is not worth having without (we add) *essential* economic security for, liberty is for happiness and no man is happy when lacking the necessities of life. But, over and above that, it is not worth having without still other

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

goods superior to economic security. There are situations when economic security and even the loss of personal liberty would be preferable to prostituting priceless spiritual values. Liberty is not worth having without virtue; without the end of all ends, the Infinite Good. Liberty is a great good and desirable precisely because of what it can procure for us, the Infinite Good.

He also touches another profound truth which he is unable to penetrate because of his pseudo-scientific bias, namely, that there can be "no freedom that is worthwhile unless the mind is trained to use its freedom. . . . Deprive a man of knowledge and the road to ever greater knowledge and you will make him inevitably the slave of those more fortunate than himself."³⁸ True, but he errs by misconceiving the nature of that knowledge. Knowledge can lead to ever greater freedom but too much of a certain kind of knowledge can enslave a person more irrevocably than any physical tyranny. He thus degrades liberty by making it dependent upon "scientific," or purely empirical knowledge, the only kind of knowledge he admits. Liberty then, following upon the dignity of such knowledge becomes as materialistic as the knowledge which fails to rise above the sensual. Liberty is incomprehensible unless it is conceived as a spiritual and moral force, which follows only when it is made dependent on true knowledge i.e. of the immaterial. Restrict liberty to an absolute dependence upon knowledge of the material and the sensual then there is no reason why the brute should not be entitled to the same freedom as man inasmuch as the brute also possesses sensitive knowledge. To argue that there is no empirical evidence for a knowledge of the spiritual i.e. metaphysical (which is an epistemological problem) is vain if only from the point of view that the progressive moral chaos of the modern world is not derived from the empirical order and that empirical knowledge is no match for moral chaos and cannot dissolve it.

Prof. Laski's theory of liberty labors under still another defect when he associates it with a defective concept of equality. His concepts of liberty and equality are defective first of all because of the defect in the essential antecedent concepts that make liberty

³⁸ *Ibid.*

and equality intelligible, namely the nature and purpose of man, the purpose of liberty, the nature of happiness. Thus, it is at first glance true that equality "is an insistence that there is no difference inherent in nature between the claims of men to happiness."³⁹ But this is true only of essential happiness and not the accidental, temporal welfare of man. Because human nature, essentially considered, is identical in all men; all men have an equal right to essential happiness by force of their very nature. But all men do not have an equal right by nature to the accidental temporal happiness of this life, e.g. superfluous goods, or whatever is considered as constituting this happiness. Material goods are essential to virtue but in and by themselves they are accidental goods and therefore there can be no equal right to actual possession of material goods. The crux of the problem here is what must be considered by human happiness and what constitutes the essential object of that happiness? If material and cultural goods, then equality to such happiness is an utopian dream and unattainable simply because accidental equality is confused with essential equality of human nature and ultimate purpose. He perverts human nature by reducing it to brute matter and denies ultimate purpose. Prof. Laski betrays this fundamental misconception when he decides that the "idea of equality is obviously an idea of levelling,"⁴⁰ a Marxist invention morally impossible of realization.

A more serious misconception of liberty is evident from his statement that "the liberty of each citizen is born of, and must be subordinated to, the liberty of the greater whole from which his whole meaning is derived."⁴¹ There are two obviously serious errors in that statement and one other is but an half-truth. First of all, liberty is not born of the group, for then, how can it, and equality too, be essential to man? Moreover, supposing that no society exists, then one must presume that man is no longer free. Man, and the family, is prior to society and both the individual and the family would still be in possession of essential liberty simply because he is in possession of human personality destined

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

for the ultimate end. Even lacking a societal purpose it is a gross error to think that man has no personal purpose for his liberty. Clearly, the only ultimate end Prof. Laski recognizes is the societal purpose. This is evident from the second error of his statement, that man derives his *whole* meaning from the group. This is a purely totalitarian concept and hardly even true of the ant or the bee, but absolutely not true of man. Man's social life is but one aspect of his whole life. Only the individual man possesses the noble dignity of personality, and society possesses dignity primarily because man possesses it. The part is for the whole, *but not in all things that belong to the part*. This is the essential distinction between the Christian conception of society as a *moral* organism and the totalitarian conception of society as a *physical* organism. If society confers essential liberty upon man then it can deprive him of it with or without reason. Why not? As long as liberty is a prerogative of man not because it pertains to his essence but because it is conferred by society then society can withhold liberty especially when man derives his whole meaning from society. That is just what Scholastics deny and on *absolute* grounds. The reason why society cannot deprive man of his essential liberty is because society did not grant it. It cannot grant it because society is not the ultimate end of man which is the same as saying that it does not give man his whole meaning. How Laski can reconcile this totalitarian concept of society with liberty, equality and democracy is unintelligible. It is no wonder that he perceives an eternal conflict between liberty and authority. That this is an accurate analysis of his thought can be confirmed when he states: "It is, I think, true to say that an individual abstracted from society and regarded as entitled to freedom outside of its environment is devoid of meaning."⁴² It is natural for man to live in society but it is even more natural for man to possess liberty for no society is conceivable unless first men are free. For, a Crusoe, or St. Simeon Stylites—Prof. Laski's own examples of isolated humans—are well conceivable without any violence to logic; but a man without liberty is inconceivable simply because a man without reason and will is inconceivable.

The only alternative to his theory that Laski is able to conceive

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 12.

is the Hegelian conception of the organic state of Hobhouse according to which one personality is "simply an expression of the organized whole" to which one belongs⁴³ so that the part realizes itself when the whole realizes itself inasmuch as the individual's will is the will of the State which is the highest part of ourselves. In criticizing this theory Prof. Laski contradicts himself. Whereas he previously insisted that the individual's liberty is born of the group, he now takes issue with Hobhouse and insists that if a man "surrenders (his will) to others he surrenders his personality. If his will is set by the will of others, he ceases to be master of himself."⁴⁴ When he insists that liberty is born of the group and is devoid of meaning outside society, he conceives liberty as an external property of man, conferred to him from *without*. When, on the other hand, he states that to surrender one's will to society one surrenders his personality, he conceives liberty as an intrinsic property of the human will. It is precisely in this way that Scholastics conceive it without, however, involving themselves later in senseless contradictions. Man is no longer master of himself when he surrenders his will to an organic state,⁴⁵ but is man master of himself and free when he receives his liberty and his whole meaning from society? How can the concept of freedom as self-mastery be compatible with his concept of liberty as born of the group? And if loss of liberty is detrimental to society, precisely in what state was personality before society confers liberty upon man? Obviously, if liberty is conferred upon man by the group, so is personality, otherwise how explain violence done to personality by the surrender of one's will? If by surrendering his will to the State, man surrenders his personality and therefore is no longer free, why is personality so independent of society and liberty is not? Prof. Laski is unaware of his real difficulty: that there is no essential difference between his concept of man as deriving his whole meaning from society, and that of Hobhouse according to which the individual is an organic unit of society.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 13-15.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

GEORGES GURVITCH, "A BILL OF SOCIAL RIGHTS" ⁴⁶

A further expression of the Naturalistic trend. The most obvious weakness of this theory of human social rights consists in Gurvitch's error of restricting himself exclusively and primarily to a consideration of external, accidental expression of human liberty without first having established a solid intellectual basis for the nature of essential and natural human liberty. His position is thus reduced to a mere plea for a more extensive application of a system of external, accidental liberties which is bound to share the fate of similar pleas not based, as they need be, on an unshakable bedrock. A mere listing of liberties is not an uncommon occurrence, but an intellectual defense of them is rare. Undermine the bases of the plea in favor of such social rights and the entire fabric totters, for it presupposes no foundation in nature.

One of the weak props supporting his fabric of social rights which are to guarantee human liberty is his rejection of "natural law" as a basis for his Bill of Rights. There is no need for it, he writes. The idea of "Nation" serves the purpose much better and should be substituted for natural law. This idea of "Nation" is to serve as the foundation and sanction and will protect human rights against the infringements of the State.⁴⁷ Gurvitch does not explain how an abstraction such as "Nation" will effectively supersede natural law as a foundation for rights. This concept, as the source and sanction of liberty, is dangerous. Essentially, it differs little from other kindred ideas which he earlier condemns: the Nazi idea of "Race," the Fascist idea of omnipotent "State," and the Communist idea of "Party elite" or class. "The Nation," writes Gurvitch, "is superior to the State, the economic organization, churches, etc."⁴⁸ This is not less harmful than "Race," "People," "State," "Party," etc. One humanly conceived absolute is as bad as another, especially when one is conceived as a means to scare off another absolute such as the State. This Nation, and the international society alone are supra-func-

⁴⁶ International Universities Press, 227 West 13th St., New York 11, N. Y.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

tional groups.⁴⁹ This is as difficult to prove as the absolute superiority of Race, Party, State, Class, and serves no purpose beneficial to human rights or to man. "The nation which affirms itself as a unity, immanent within the plurality of groups."⁵⁰ Such unity is obviously physical because Gurvitch does not admit any moral unity inasmuch as he does not admit supra-sensible knowledge.

By advocating social "pluralism"⁵¹ as a force to promote liberty he undermines the true concept of an hierarchical order. Such pluralism moreover, postulating as it does an artificial tension and conflict among various social groups, would be destructive of a rational social order based on justice for, instead of the moral harmony effected by justice, he advocates a system of checks and balances. This also betrays his deep distrust of constituted authority. He overlooks the fact that authority does not have a merely negative function but an essential positive one to perform. He thus becomes guilty of excessive optimism in believing that an interplay and counter-balance among various social groups—among which he places the State on par with labor federations, e.g.—will automatically result in social harmony and thus guarantee liberty.

Related to this is another serious weakness of Gurvitch's social theory, his apparent conviction about the inevitability of class struggle. In fact, he takes it for granted that it is a natural phenomenon.⁵² As if modern society were not atomized enough, he offers additional basis for such atomization. He divides the members of society into strict classes of workers, consumers, citizens, etc.⁵³ How any program of social rights based on such presuppositions can have validity and generate social harmony is incomprehensible. How e.g. can "Nation" guarantee such rights when it is itself divided internally by social pluralism and torn by class struggle? Moreover, the individual bracketed under the various functions of "worker, consumer, citizen, etc." Prof. Gurvitch affects to call the "common man." The "common man" differs not essentially from kindred notions such as the "economic

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 104.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 93.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 59, sq.; p. 104.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

man," the "biological man," the "psychological man," etc. This only betrays Gurvitch's lack of a fully-rounded and complete concept of human nature.

"The goal of society," he writes again, "is the fraternity of men and groups which can be fulfilled only through . . . a plurality of equalitarian associations protecting the liberty and human dignity of each member integrated in the national community."⁵⁴ The purpose of society is ill-conceived by Prof. Gurvitch. He calls it the "common interest" which he defines as "simply a mobile equilibrium between opposing interests and there are as many multiple and equivalent aspects of common interest as there are factual possibilities to equilibrate conflicting interests in a particular domain."⁵⁵ Either the language is intentionally vague or he does not have a clearly defined concept of the common good of society. Thus, although he insists that the common interest is not an abstract generality but a concrete whole, he attributes to it a purely negative character as the absence or diminution of the conflict among the various opposing interests. He therefore proceeds to nullify his idea of the common good as a concrete whole by postulating within it disruptive forces that tend to undermine its unity. The common good is either a positive good or it is nothing. No amount of "equilibrium" or "equivalence" among various conflicting social and individual interests will make them "common." The common good must be common from the efficient as well as the material point of view. By conceiving the common good of society as an equilibrium among private interests social purpose can never become common. While it is true that there is no common good without private good of individuals this is not the same as saying that the common good is nothing but the harmony of private interests—a harmony that is imposed from without and above, by the Nation. "Equilibrated" or not, the interests of individuals and of private social groups never cease, so he believes, to be private interests and thus their totality will never constitute the common good of society. What he advocates is private activity for private good, harmonized with the private

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 74; p. 102; p. 105.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 105.

activity for private good of another conflicting social group, and not social cooperation and communion for a common good, which differs essentially from private good. He would have us believe that an inner tension is an essential constituent of the common good of society inasmuch as he offers a division of the common good into "political common interest and economic common interest, etc." ⁵⁶ Presumably, the work of integrating all these common interests ⁵⁷ with the all-inclusive common interest would belong to the principle "Nation," which Prof. Gurvitch places above the State in power and value. Obviously, no such integration can be effected without authority. Where then in the Nation does this authority reside? How does it differ from the authority of the State?

HERBERT HOOVER, "THE CHALLENGE TO LIBERTY" ⁵⁸

The chief merit of Herbert Hoover's discussion on liberty lies in this that he decidedly does not subscribe to Naturalism. He definitely adopts the traditional American view of inalienable rights which are the endowments of the Creator. He also believes that society exists for human betterment although he fails to define clearly what this would comprise.

This good moral attitude, however, is marred by his insistence in identifying traditionally Christian and American social *theory* with historical American social *practice*. Although he does repudiate Laissez-faire, he nevertheless subscribes to the tenets of traditional Liberalism in politics and Individualism in economics. He is in error when he apparently intimates that the only alternative to Communism, Fascism and Naziism is the kind of Liberalism he professes, unaware that there is plenty of room in between.

A peculiar defect of his position on liberty is his conviction that it best serves societal purpose "solely through the release of constructive instincts and aspirations of man." ⁵⁹ In truth however,

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 105.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 106.

⁵⁸ New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1934.

⁵⁹ *Op. cit.*, p. 4.

free human operation is not instinctive but rational, and rational it must remain if societal purpose is to be served by liberty. It is this implied conviction of Mr. Hoover's that is dangerous and hardly an improvement on the old *Individualism*, a conviction that a free interplay of blind natural forces will ensure the realization of the purpose of society. He thus is prone to suspect government intervention for the common good as a manifestation of totalitarianism. Accordingly, the function of authority is purely negative and protective.

If liberty is self-mastery, the power conferred upon man by the Creator, how reconcile this concept with economic determinism in the form of blind forces operating in the economic realm? May not one conclude that the laws of supply and demand can easily make a joke out of such self-mastery? Is man master of himself but not of his economic environment? God has made man master over nature by endowing him with intelligence and freedom. To insist that man is unable to master the natural principles of economic activity and must permit full sway to them is to admit determinism and not self-determination. If man cannot master his economic environment what does his self-mastery profit him? As proof that man must abide by "economic laws" he points to Fascism, Nazism and Communism. The failure of these ruthless systems is a sign that all efforts to control economic environment are doomed to failure. Here again, Mr. Hoover is convinced that there is only one alternative to totalitarianism, Liberalism, purged and illumined. It is important to note that the great issue of the day is not simply a choice between Capitalism, as we know it, and Communism, simply because the difference between right and wrong, justice and injustice is not a difference between Liberalism and Communism.

Another defect of his concept of liberty reveals itself when he apparently assigns the promotion of self-interest as an essential function of liberty.⁶⁰ In an exaggerated sense, self-interest might be identified with the power of personal self-realization but this is hardly borne out in the treatise. Thus, his case for liberty labors under the fundamental misconception of the common good,

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 25 sq.

traditionally liberalistic. He implies that merely by promoting the private good, with government merely curbing abuses, the common good is automatically ensured. This is contradicted by the inherent evils of the system and the encouragement it gave to Communism. While it is true that the activity of the individual members of society must be free and spontaneous it is no less true that the common good can be secured only by cooperative, coordinated effort. Social activity is specifically different from private activity; the latter does not become social activity automatically. Self-interest is not the interest of all and a totality of individual goods does not constitute the common good of society.

Mr. Hoover lists selfish and altruistic instincts, good and bad, and infers that "economic laws may be said to be the deduction from human experience of the average response of these varied selfish or altruistic raw materials of the human animal when applied in the mass. These cannot be repealed by official fiat."⁶¹ That precisely constitutes the chief objection against liberalistic theory. Man should not participate in economic activity as a human animal. Economic activity, no less than any other human activity, must be controlled by reason and will and guided by moral law. If not by the individual, then whenever that is lacking, by authority. The fundamental truth is that instinct, whether economic, political, or biological, must ever be subject to rational control and human conduct fails to be truly human when it is swayed to a great extent by instinct. To even imply that a free interplay of instinctive forces will eventually level itself into a virtuous equilibrium of human interests is to believe unreasonably that blind forces can realize rational purpose. The more freedom given to the play of instinctive forces the less freedom does man have and the cause of liberty is bound to suffer as it did in the past.

The inherent weakness of the Hooverian thesis on liberty is his unhappy conviction that Individualism is man's benefactor and Totalitarianism is the malefactor and that there is no other salvation for man.⁶² If no happy medium exists between Individualism,

⁶¹ *Ibid*, p. 27.

⁶² Chapter V.

so open to abuses and so enslaved by the blind forces of nature, and Totalitarianism, so antihuman, one can only despair or choose the lesser of two evils

The sorry state of human liberty these days, aggravated particularly by the disappointments consequent upon World War II, prompted feverish speculation and study of human liberty and means of promoting it by the drafting of bills of human rights which would serve as a guarantee of liberty in the face of the present-day threat of Totalitarianism. The purpose of all these attempts is a universal recognition of human liberty as an inalienable right of individuals regardless of the State to which they may belong. Eventually, the hope is to win international recognition of basic human rights, that the value of personality may reign supreme in all nations regardless of their political form. Though these efforts are commendable the beliefs that support these various pleas for human rights are too often painfully inadequate. Recognition of human rights will avail little without a recognition of those deeper, more fundamental values which give existence, meaning, content, universal validity and purpose to human rights.

It will suffice to present a brief examination of one such attempt among many to draft a Bill of Human Rights. Essentially, all such drafts and declarations are in basic agreement, the difference appears in the enumeration of such rights and the disagreement as to what is a *basic* right.⁶³

Because of the widely distributed cultures represented in the drafting of one particular Bill of Rights, The Statement of Essential Rights, by a Committee of the American Law Institute,⁶⁴ it has been chosen in preference to others.

The merit of this Statement of Essential Rights rests not so much in its intrinsic value as an embodiment of truth but merely in this that it offers proof of a healthful tendency towards the Truth. On the whole, the impression is given the reader that if

⁶³ For a survey of such declarations see the "Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association," Washington, D. C., 1946, Vol. XXI, pp. 135 sq.

⁶⁴ The *Annals* of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences, Jan., 1946, Vol. 243, pp. 18-26.

there is a trend towards a grudging concession to the value of some Thomistic principles it is mostly due to the helplessness of the modern intellectual, a helplessness that visits him because he has tried everything else.⁶⁵ This half-hearted consciousness of the Christian tradition is at least an effort to soften the naturalistic bias.

Inspired perhaps by the feeling of inadequacy of their own ideology in the face of the totalitarian threat, the group of contributors labor under the false theory of Pragmatism that a struggle between truth and falsehood is desirable for its own sake and that such a struggle of ideas will secure the ascendancy of democracy. Experience should have taught them that a battle-ground of rival ideologies will no more assure the victory of truth and give birth to a stable peace than a battle-ground of rival armies. As long as human life is considered a gladiatorial arena wherein the victory of truth over error is automatically and inevitably decided by an happy alloy of "human experience," which of itself will solve all human problems, then one can only conclude that peace and recognition of human rights will remain problematical and as inconclusive as the struggle itself. To place such a positive and necessary value on mere discussion and intellectual warfare is but a naive application, on an intellectual level, of the in-human evolutionary credo of the survival of the fittest. A sincere search for truth has little in common with the belief in a beligerent genesis of truth. This attitude is reflected in the introduction to the Statement itself.⁶⁶ There is also a plea for "good will" and for "a new alignment of forces" to ensure peace and respect for human dignity. This is futile unless the good will and the forces to be aligned derive their essential strength and inspiration from moral principles and absolute spiritual values. We must insist, echoing the voice of the Popes, that the world's problems are at bottom moral problems and the approach to their solution must be primarily a moral approach. To believe, as the introduction implies, that "good will" is an accidental disposition of mind which can be assumed as easily as a new mood is

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 56.

⁶⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. vii.

wishful thinking and hardly serious. To be a positive force for good, "good will" must proceed from an inner principle, from a deep moral conviction. A mere external alignment of forces can serve no good purpose unless that alignment is based on the most essential of all alignments, man to God. To express the pious platitude that Christianity has taught that rights come from God is never enough unless there is added the conviction that human rights lead to God not less than that they come from God. To plead for a "common aim" and a "common sense of values" is vain because it smacks of human invention. The basic values giving reason and purpose to life exist; they are not man-made but God-made. The problem is not one of a new alignment, but of the moral and spiritual forces behind that alignment. Alignments of forces there always have been, but an alignment of moral forces stemming from a recognition of, and submission to, the natural moral law, this has been lacking too often.

What is offered as a "common aim" and a "common sense of values"? We are told that the "human approach" is the "key to the new pattern of mankind."⁶⁷ That is begging the question. What is the human approach? To ascertain what is the true human approach one must first ascertain what is truly human nature. Every inhuman ideology professes a "human approach." The human approach can assume many divergent and destructive forms: Rousseau has his "human approach"; there was also the "human approach" of Darwin, Freud, Marx, etc. Is the nature of man purely material, biological, economic, political? A common aim will depend on what is essentially and truly human. Dozens of conflicting philosophies of life promote their particular brand of Humanism. The value of the "Statement of Essential Rights" depends on the basic values underlying all human existence: the origin and purpose of man.

Finally, the question of basic rights demands clarification of what makes rights basic. Basic rights presuppose a right that is fundamental to all other rights. It is not the right to life⁶⁸ for after all we are speaking of the rights of *living* beings. The basic

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. x.

⁶⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 12.

right of all human rights is to realize the essential purpose of human personality by fulfilling what is in it of the Will of God. This alone guarantees the right to existence, to life, to a *full* life, etc. The question that is ever basic is: for what purpose do individuals have rights? The total impression given by reading the Statement on Essential Rights is that *public opinion makes liberty*.

THE CITY OF MAN ⁶⁹

This comprises a joint declaration of a group of more or less prominent people. Strangely enough Reinhold Niebuhr is one of them. It is a purely naturalistic philosophy and a program for human liberty in spite of its superficial assurances to the contrary and notwithstanding its seeming acceptance of such Christian concepts as freedom, law, dignity of human personality, destiny, inalienable rights, all of which, on closer examination, are divested of their true and genuine content. As an answer to the present-day totalitarian threat the group which drew up this program for democracy offers a totalitarian substitute. In place of Naziism's Race, Fascism's State, and Communism's Class it offers an absolute of its own. With the rash and naive hope of dispossessing the cruel and inhuman pseudo-religious totalitarianism of today they offer a pseudo-religious democracy of tomorrow which can have no other consequences but the resurgence of the cruelty and inhumanity imposed on helpless suffering peoples by the State, Race and Class. The poisonous philosophy that originally served as the prime cause of totalitarianism is now offered as a panacea. For, what is inhuman and vicious about totalitarian ideology is precisely its unconditional claim to absoluteness. Now whether that absolute value is claimed for the Race, State, Party or, as this group contends, Humanity, makes little difference as far as the eventual fate of the individual person is concerned. This program is antihuman and evil precisely because it repudiates any value above the purely human and physical values. Thus it is in fundamental agreement with the essential anti-humanism of totalitarian philosophy. It is not a program against enslavement but merely offers a different title for the same kind of slavery.

⁶⁹ New York, Viking Press, 1940.

"Humanity," or "Universal Democracy" or the State of States offers no protection to the intrinsic worth of personality against the infringements of the State; it merely offers a stronger, more universal and monstrous agent for such infringements. A number of citations support this judgment.

Human perfection consists in progress which is conceived as an endless process without a definite goal. The purpose of individual life and of social life are one and the same.⁷⁰

"And first of all, we affirm that the meaning and goal of life, individual and collective, are progress and growth in intellect and action, and that peace, universal peace, is the prerequisite of progress and growth. We realize that man's effort is endless and that no perfectibility leads to an ultimate and unchangeable perfection for mankind to live in happily ever after."

Repudiating corrupted Liberalism the Declaration calls for a new democracy based on a new foundation, not that of shifting opinion but of conviction. "There is, indeed no liberty but one: the right, which is a duty, of making oneself and others free through absolute allegiance to the final goal of man. . . . There is no comfort but one: pride in the duty performed."⁷¹ We agree that there is but one essential liberty, freedom to achieve the final goal. But one must take serious issue with the Declaration's concept of the final goal which is purely naturalistic and does not respond to the true nature of man, therefore hardly becoming a rational nature destined for personal immortality. The final goal as conceived by the City of Man offers no more hope for true personal self-perfection than the final goal of Nazism and Communism which it repudiates. This is quite clear from the group's definition of Democracy: "It is the plenitude of heart-service to a highest religion embodying the essence of all higher religions. Democracy is nothing more and nothing less than humanism in theocracy and rational theocracy in universal humanism."⁷² Unfortunately this definition of Democracy can be applied to Communism without the

⁷⁰ *Op. cit.*, p. 20.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

⁷² *Op. cit.*, p. 33.

least change. If this Democracy is not the absolute, what is higher than it? Is it for man, or is man for this Democracy? The group professes to deplore the total absorption of the individual by the State. It offers a remedial substitute for such absorption by using identical language that condemns man to a total absorption by Democracy.

“The teachers of totalitarian philosophy have said that ‘everything must be within the state, nothing against the state, nothing outside the state.’ Democracy teaches that everything must be within humanity, nothing against humanity, nothing outside of humanity.”⁷³

The negation of personality by total absorption into this new absolute is as destructive as that of the Communist or Nazi or Fascist absolute. What meaning can human dignity have when the individual person derives his whole value and meaning from an undefined absolutistic Humanity? Without the individual person Humanity is a pure abstraction. Its value and even existence are derived from the value and existence of the individual. It is utterly absurd to attribute a distinct value to this abstraction apart from the value of the concrete human individual. And, since there is nothing outside of humanity for which to strive, according to the Declaration, humanity becomes the infinite good. This evil is not specifically different from the evil of the falsely personified absolute of Communism and Fascism. It is, however, quantitatively more vicious inasmuch as it is hoped to become a universal condition.

Perversely, too, does the Declaration recognize and conceive Divine Providence: “. . . a divine intention governs the universe—be it called God or Deity or the Holy Ghost or the Absolute or Logos or even Evolution.”⁷⁴ Bother with what one calls it; the all important thing is how one *conceives* it! We conceive God as a Personal Absolute Being; how conceive Evolution in this way? Moreover, the absolute end of the universe is God Himself and can be nothing else without His ceasing to be God. The primary intention of the “God” or Evolution of the Declara-

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

tion is the direction "from matter to life and from life to spirit, from chaos to order," etc.⁷⁵ The Declaration does not manifest who or what is to be the term of that direction.

There is no supra-mundane purpose, no personal immortality.⁷⁶

"For any religion or doctrine cloaking injustice and misery on earth under the promise of some transcendent bliss to come deserves the scorn of Marx, who called them the opium of the people. This earth of ours is the laboratory where the validity of eternal ideas is tested under the limits of space and time. Here and now is the scene where the divine intention which governs the universe must be enforced. . . ."

Each individual, then, is to burn as a holocaust on the altar of Absolute Humanity subject to the experimentations of the high priests of this new religion with this earthly laboratory. Since the whole purpose of man is realized here on earth, the only happiness offered him is the temporal happiness of the brute, but even then, not individually but collectively. This religion is incomparably more potent than opium. Why an abstract humanity should constitute a higher value than the concrete individual man who gives humanity any meaning at all, is utterly unintelligible. By what right does such abstract humanity impose an unconditional obligation upon the individual person to live a life of service dedicated to the interests of that humanity is the great mystery of this false religion. One can think of far better causes for which to sacrifice a long life.

"Democracy alone combines the fundamental characteristics of law, equality and justice."⁷⁷ Actually, Democracy is not the ultimate source of law, equality and justice, but necessarily presupposes these. Democracy is possible only when law, equality and justice are recognized as its foundations. Democracy is a purely human institution and a purely human invention and therefore man is prior to it. It is left to the will of the people, guided by law, equality and justice, whether the society of which they are

⁷⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 47.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

⁷⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 28.

the members is to be endowed with a democratic character or not. Law, equality and justice presuppose the natural moral law and have no meaning without it. The natural moral law is therefore, above any society and above any social structure, democratic or otherwise. Moral life, which must characterize the life of liberty, is conceived by the Declaration as democratic action and service in the name of universal humanity. Thus, only that is moral which promotes democracy; that is morally wrong which interferes with the aim of democracy, that is morally good which is in accord with the needs of democracy.

Finally, "universal and total, democracy is the principle of liberty and life."⁷⁸ The source of liberty is universal democracy and this hardly differs essentially from the kindred notions that Fascism and Communism are each the absolute source of human liberty. If Democracy is the source of liberty it must also be the final end of liberty. Liberty, then, is not the power of rational nature to direct itself to its proper end; it is a quality conferred by democracy for the good of democracy. It cannot serve the destiny of person but only the welfare of a pseudo-absolute. Human life itself has no intrinsic worth; its value is borrowed from total democracy and the primary purpose of that life is to enhance the perfection of a universal collectivity. Man is to lose his identity and personal dignity in a vague, colossal, amorphous, irrational mass. The authors of the Declaration are incapable of perceiving the intrinsic viciousness of totalitarianism they so vigorously deplore. One only wonders how they can attack and condemn something they are unable to recognize. They see in it not the inhuman slavery and the degradation, even annihilation of personality, simply because they themselves advocate the same kind of slavery and personal degradation in the name of another absolute. The only objection they can have to the inherent viciousness and cruelty of totalitarianism is its limited character, the fact that it is not universal enough to suit them. As if the best remedy for cancer were to have more of it. They oppose Communistic totalitarianism unwittingly because it is not totalitarian enough, the absolute of Communism is not universal

⁷⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 27.

enough. There is no objection against the inhumanity of Communism, against the totally earthy, animal purpose since it offers no better or higher purpose; they can offer no objection against the degrading, because depersonalizing, absorption of the individual by the State for they offer an identical absorption on a grander scale into a Super State. They can have no objection against the Communistic thievery of human dignity for they too seek to rob man of his dignity in the very same manner. What they actually propose as an antidote to present-day totalitarianism is super-totalitarianism; not a Fascist State but a super world State yet demanding the same complete allegiance; not the Nazi super-race but a super-humanity with identical consequences. Liberty is taken out of the narrow framework of current totalitarianism, where the group seems to think it is being unduly cramped and placed in greener, broader acres of universal totalitarianism where it suffers hardly less. The argument is implied that the hope of liberty does not lie in a geographically and politically limited totalitarianism of the Fascistic or Communistic type but in the universally extended range of an identical totalitarianism of far greater power. The gospel of this great new religious fraud seems to be: give up the individual humanity which is yours in order to participate in a Humanity which has no meaning or value without the humanity of the individual.

LIBERALISTIC INDIVIDUALISM

Liberalism in the economic and political realms has been generally discredited. The fashion of the day is Marxian Collectivism in any of its shades. But the spirit of Liberalism is still a persistent attitude of the mind, its spirit still holds sway. License is still disguised as liberty in other than the economic and political fields, especially in religion, morality, jurisprudence, etc. For that reason it would be a serious error to consider liberalistic individualism as an exclusively economic and political movement. Its manifestations in these particular realms of human activity are mere accidental expressions of a deep-rooted attitude of mind. These expressions of liberalistic individualism are merely the most obvious manifestations of a tendency that touches upon all spheres of life. Nothing is too sacred to escape its blight.

The individualist-liberalistic movement is an aggregate of economic, political, philosophical and even theological theory inasmuch as ethics is involved in all its phases and a liberalistic theology is as much a part of this movement as politics. But just as all human activity is moral activity so liberalism is primarily an anti-moral movement. While it has received its name and militant program with the modern age it would be an error to restrict it to any one period of history. It is as old as selfishness and pride. It is as old as rebellion against God. For if liberalism means anything it means freedom from dependence upon God. As an organized movement, however, it can be traced definitely to the Renaissance and the Protestant Revolt. From that era forward revolution has been immortalized, in fact, it has become synonymous with reform and progress. It must be further emphasized that this movement is a spirit, a philosophy i.e. a human trend that begins with ideas and only then is translated into act. As a modern spirit it is often characterized as the capitalistic spirit.⁷⁹

"It denies the sovereignty of the moral law in the economic world, the principle of authority in politics, and the existence of an objective divine truth in religion. It makes self-interest the supreme law in economics, the will of the majority the sovereign power of the state and private opinion the only arbiter in religious matters."⁸⁰

The spirit of liberalism has failed to subordinate material goods and their use, and economics in general, to the ultimate end of man. Even the earthly happiness of the individual is absolute. This spirit has separated human aims and directed itself towards unnatural selfish goals to the exclusion of man's final end. In this way too, it prostitutes essential human liberty by divorcing it from an ultimate purpose other than the individual himself. The individual thus becomes his own final end and all the power of his nature are exercised to serve that end.⁸¹

⁷⁹ Ryan, L. A., "Charity and the Social Order," in the *Thomist*, vol. IV, No. 1, January, 1942, p. 71.

⁸⁰ Christopher Dawson, *Religion and the Modern State*, New York: Sheed and Ward, 1935, p. 133.

⁸¹ Sturzo, Luigi, *Church and State*, New York: Longmans Green, & Co., 1939, pp. 427-428.

"... the quest for true individual liberty in a philosophy founded on autonomy of reason from faith and of human personality from every external power. Man in virtue of freedom not only acquires the habit of self-determination, overcoming the bonds that practical life imposes on him, but becomes automatically an authority and law unto himself, for he conceives of himself in universal form."

While the viciousness of totalitarianism consists in the establishment of the social organism as a divinized personality and the *summum bonum* of man, the vice of liberalism consists, on the other hand, in the enthronement of the individual as an absolute and his own personal welfare becomes the absolute ultimate good. There are no controls upon the will except the caprices of its subject, the individual. Willing, of course, depends on judgment, hence the implication is that the individual has possession of the absolute truth and is the measure of the true and the good, and therefore, is infallible and impeccable in his external human activity simply because his internal activity is absolutely autonomous, independent of any supra-human objective norms and laws. Such an attitude can easily result, as it often does, in the irrational view that rejects freedom of the will whenever responsibility for personal acts is in question, and, on the other hand, exalts human liberty whenever the right to any action is in question. Even an explicit self-contradiction is taken lightly.

Since the exercise of human liberty is essentially dependent on freedom of judgment, liberalism sanctifies license in judgment prior to license in willing. Justification for intellectual license is placed in the individual's absolute freedom to live his life as he sees it. The essence of the liberalistic concept of human liberty consists in the unconditional claim of the individual to the absolute right of choosing between truth and falsehood, good and evil. For, what is evil and what is good is not determined for him by any objective rule or norm outside his own intellect and will; what is lawful or unlawful is not determined by the essentials of human nature; the individual is his own law and norm, the repository of his own truth, the archetype of his own good.⁸²

⁸² F. Sarda y Salvany, *What is Liberalism*, trans. by Conde B. Pallen, St. Louis: Herder Co., 1899, pp. 31-32.

"Now the unity of Liberalism is not positive but negative; it has no unity of its own; it is by virtue of its opposition to truth, which is essentially one, that Liberalism becomes accidentally one. As the vis-a-vis of truth it possesses the unity of opposition. The different degrees of its denial will constitute the degrees of its opposition and so give us the varieties in the negative unity of its denial. Denial is its unity in general, and this ranges through the entire realm of negation, the degree of denial being determined by the degree of truth denied."

Truth, goodness and purpose, the three transcendent properties which make human liberty a noble reality, mold its existence, nature and dignity, and make it intelligible, are not found outside of the individual's total experience. This condemns them to a subjective validity whereby they become as changeable as human experience itself. The result is a complete ontological perversion of reality which inevitably perverts human judgment and human willing. Liberty thus loses its rational character and its safe and sure anchorage. Man's good lies in absolute freedom and equality. Actually this absolute liberty and equality are cruel jokes. All men, it is believed, possess an identical and unrestricted right to freely strive for their individual happiness with the added perversion, that individual happiness is viewed as consisting in the satisfaction of all desires, none of which are deemed unlawful, limited only by the conflicting desires of one's neighbor. This right to individual happiness is conceived to be so unalterably bound up with human nature that man never has a right to bind himself in any way that would prejudice his temporal happiness especially for life, as, e.g. in marriage, since this destroys innate freedom. Because the individual himself may not constrain that innate freedom much less can any external force from without, especially moral force.

This idea of liberty is joined to an equally extreme and false idea of optimism, namely, that there is nothing evil about natural desires, by which are meant desires uncontrolled by reason, and that full expression must be given to them. Moreover, it is believed that human perfection, the highest possible, is attainable here and now by granting all such desires the fullest expression and gratifi-

cation. Extreme egoism is enthroned as the ultimate and supreme value, tempered, if at all, by a sort of vague altruistic humanitarianism, and because this inevitably results in irreparable disorder between reason and passion within each individual, he falls into hopeless and abject slavery—to himself, or more accurately, to his lower nature. Inasmuch as liberty thus conceived was not less thought to pertain essentially to human nature, all activity of that nature had to be characterized with such freedom so that human activity in all its phases and manifestations: economics, politics, marriage, family life, ethics, and religion was impressed with this spirit of license with the result that man was, at least theoretically, completely divorced from his ultimate end and from his essential dependence upon the Creator. This secularism of private life spreads into all the ramifications of public life.⁸⁸

What such a philosophy does to the societal purpose, the common good, needs little further comment if only to judge from the experience of the last few generations. Suffice to say, that the common welfare was conceived as the good of the majority, or at least, it was identified with individual good and was to be attained by each individual striving to satisfy his own selfishness. Liberalism thus developed as individual selfishness multiplied many times over and in many directions, a selfishness that aggravated the evils of society between individuals themselves, between the community and individuals, between minor social groups, between nations, between alignments of nations. It has given birth to evils such as pauperism and a diminution of social charitableness, discontent of oppressed workers, revolutions, exaggerated nationalism, destructive and war-provoking imperialism, exploiting colonization, and negatively by way of reaction, it is directly responsible for the strength and growth and dominance of its vicious step-brother, the opposite irrational extreme of World Communism. The incipient and wildly conceived exaggerated humanism developed into a rampaging humanism with the inescapable anti-

⁸⁸ Leo XIII, *Libertas Praestantissimum*; also, Pius XI, *Quadragesimo Anno*, *passim*.

human effects.⁸⁴ Thus were destroyed the very foundations of moral law, virtue and true brotherhood.

COLLECTIVISM

Liberty for or against God is the basic issue in the universe today. There are two extremes of liberty: that of Individualism, when man sets himself up as god and attributes omnipotence to his freedom; and that of Totalitarianism, which sets up the community as god and attributes omnipotence to the community especially to those who rule the community. Whereas liberalistic individualism broke with the traditional Christian social philosophy upholding the morally organic structure of society and made the individual the heart and goal of its system, other philosophies developed with the aim of regaining the organic structure of society. But, misconceiving the nature of the social organism they misconceived its purpose too. These extremes in philosophy have one fundamental trait in common, the perversion of human liberty either in its super-exaltation or in its denial.

The collectivist philosophies, moreover, have this feature in common with individualistic philosophy in that they regard society as completely divorced from any standards apart from the purely temporal, social and economic. Human society and all human activity is based on purely socio-economic foundations instead of the moral law. The absolute autonomy of society is asserted against the universal rule of God, and therefore, against the autonomy of the individual. They differ from the individualist philosophies in this that they affirm the all important basic unit of society to be not the individual or the family but the group conceived as class, nation, race, party or even humanity. In any case, all social collectivisms as statism, racism, communism are either developments of individualism pursued remorselessly to the logical extreme, or have arisen as reactions against it with the result that the liberty which was degraded and depersonalized by individual-

⁸⁴ Pius XI, *Quadragesimo Anno*, passim; *Ingravescentibus Malis*, in *Principles for Peace*, ed. Rev. Harry Koenig, Washington, D. C., N. C. W. C., 1943, § 1274.

ism has been appropriated by the group.⁸⁵ It is impossible to determine which of the two evils is more pernicious: unorganized and anarchic individualism which develops into a social pattern by means of the licentiousness of the individual; or the ruthlessly organized and regimented collectivism which develops into a social pattern all its own by means of the licentiousness of a dictatorial clique imposing its corruption from above. The choice is one between a moral cancer eating its way up from the members of the social body, or from the head down to the members.

Modern concrete manifestations of collectivism appear mainly in Communism, Naziism and Fascism. The threat of the last two is not imminent today. Communism is the dominant collectivist threat of the day meeting its only worthwhile opposition in traditional Christian philosophy. The chief characteristic of collectivism—credit for discerning it belongs to the Christian mind inasmuch as liberalism had corrupted its knowledge of true absolute values only to become helpless in discerning the true from the false—is its hypostatization and divinization of the group. Where before the individual was absolute and absolute freedom was his power, now the group becomes omnipotent and tyranny is its power. By means of this hypostatization the individual is divested of his true personal dignity and partakes only of the personified collective dignity. The group is the only recognized value and is an entity apart from the individual members who compose it. The basic trend of collectivism is monotheistic inasmuch as it found the innumerable individualistic gods repugnant and productive of disorder and thus proceeds to give the individualists a fitting idol as long as it was idols they wanted.

For Communism the ultimate reality-value is the "class" since its ultimate objective is not so much a classless society as a society of one class. Temporarily, this ultimate objective is concretized and personified in the party. In Naziism the ultimate reality-value is the race; for Fascism it is the State. In each there results the greatest philosophical perversion of which the human mind is capable: an accidental social unity of a moral nature is elevated

⁸⁵ Pius XI, *Quadragesimo Anno*, passim; Ryan, L. A., *op. cit.*, p. 70; Sturzo, L., *op. cit.*, p. 452 sq.

and enthroned as the substantial, concrete collective absolute, and worse it is the only reality and value and absolutely rejects any reality or value it cannot absorb or control absolutely. Consequent upon this is a perversion of a mere means into an absolute end for its own sake when the community-life becomes the principle and end of all life; and the perversion of personality when the dignity of person is attributed to an accidental reality which is not actually self-subsisting and possesses no rational nature of its own. The intrinsic evil of this perversion of thought can be only realized if one attempted to treat the hammer and saw of a carpenter as if they had the personality of the carpenter. Unfortunately, this idiocy is not so apparent to the modern mind which rejected an absolute criterion of the true and false, of good and evil and therefore fails miserably in taking the measure of totalitarianism. Only when the brutality of collectivism cannot be misinterpreted, only then does the modern mind become suspicious of that evil, but only suspicious and not convinced as witness the war-time attempts to compromise with this evil. Deploring and lamenting the brutality, the modern mind fails to discern the evil philosophy which makes such brutality inevitable. The abject failure of the modern mind to perceive the real viciousness of totalitarianism can only be attributed to the bad habit of judgment it acquired whereby it esteems instruments and machines as more important than the person, as witness the idolization of the business corporation, of material progress or even of democracy, as if it were anything apart from, and above, human personality, of money, of gadgets; in brief, the choice of material values over the moral and spiritual. The self-evident truth is that the power of human liberty destroys itself whenever it is exercised to dethrone God from the hearts of men and erects idols of one kind or another. This truth, moreover, is extremely painful for the fact is that man has seldom in history been *robbed* of his freedom which is essentially inviolable, but he has often, and continues to do so, *sold* his God-given freedom on the black-market of atheism and materialism for a bit of earthly happiness.

The gigantic fraud of collectivism was unmasked long ago by the Popes. It may be cruel to remind the world in a "we told you so" manner but the fact is that only today is the real evil

of militant collectivism being recognized and yet, sad to say, only because material values are threatened. Communism was not heretofore being condemned for having robbed individuals and whole peoples of their spiritual birthright; on the other hand its program of violent and disorderly distribution of concentrated wealth awakened cries of anguish over the western world. The Popes have consistently pointed out the terrible moral evils of collectivism even before the dawn of the present century and continued to do so to the present day. Pius XI addressed memorable words to a pilgrimage of the French Workers' Syndicates on September 18, 1939:⁸⁰

"One might sum up this doctrine with brutal simplicity: all for the State, nothing for the individual. No, the Church does not teach such a doctrine. But neither does it teach the contrary: all for the individual and nothing for the State. No, this is its privilege: to walk as it were . . . among all the nations of the earth—we do not say *races*—and to safeguard in all and everywhere the middle path in which virtue lies, *in medio stat virtus*.

. . . the individual from birth until death, needs the State for his life and his own development. But it is not true to say that the *State is a person*, an independent person, speaking in its own name. . . . Thus when one speaks of the soul of the State, it is a way of speaking that has its foundation in reality *but which is really an abstraction*. And the State can exercise *no personal function* except through the individuals who compose it. That is the evidence, but in our day it is no longer recognized in many places. It is said almost everywhere one way or another . . . that everything belongs to the State, nothing to the individual . . . what an error lies in that expression. In the first place it is against the facts, for if the individual is really dependent on society in some way, *society without the individual would be nothing but a pure abstraction*. But there is something very grave behind this: those who say that all belongs to the State also say that the State is something divine. Then the individual is divinized but in a new way; it is a species of social pantheism.

⁸⁰ Address: "Voilà une Audience," in *Principles for Peace*, *op. cit.* § 1295, 1296, 1297; italics mine.

. . . There is an error here so evident *that it is astonishing that men, otherwise serious and talented, say it and teach to the masses.*

A long passage, as important today as then, but unheeded then as now. Everything for the State, or the class, or the race. "Everything" of course, includes human nature, human powers, human personality, human liberty, human rights, all without exception are subordinated and sacrificed for the attainment and maintenance of a supposedly supra- and extra- human absolute. A gross personification which finds its parallel not even in the debasing idolatry of the ancients. The power of liberty is great indeed—even to the point where it can destroy itself or stultify itself. All economic, political, juridical and social activities, even the purely cultural such as music and art or athletics, far from promoting the personal development of the individual for his own happiness and promoting the salutary relations between man and man and man and God, are subordinated to the abject service of class, state or race. The monstrous collectivism claims individual existence only for itself and appropriates all value to such a degree that all other existence and value are derived from it. In this way it lays claim to absolute superiority over anything else that exists not excluding God. Cynically and blasphemously it appropriates all the sublime attributes which are the exclusive property of the Divine. It claims to be all-good, all-just, all-lovable, all-perfect, all-holy, all powerful, infallible, and impeccable. Total perfection itself, it is the only reality that can impart perfection to man. Only the literary genius of a mind like Dostoevski's is able to describe its nature accurately.⁸⁷

COMMUNISM: THE COLLECTIVITY OF THE CLASS THROUGH PARTY ELITE

As Individualism is characterized chiefly by its opposition to, and denial of, truth and its embodiment of falsehood, so too does Communism.

"The untruth of Communism is greater than its truth.
It has even disfigured truth. It is above all a spiritual

⁸⁷ *The Possessed*, Modern Library, pp. 408-429.

not a social falsehood. What is false and terrible is the very spirit of communism. Its spirit is the negation of spirit, its negation of the spiritual principle in man. Its untruth is its rejection of God. Everything flows from that source. Communism is inhuman for the denial of God leads to a denial of man. Communism has not stopped midway in the traditional realm of humanism. It has denied God not in the name of man, as generally happens, but in the name of a third principle—the social collectivity, its new divinity . . . (Marx's) man has lost the image and likeness of God; he is the image and likeness of society. He is entirely a product of his social surroundings, of the economics of his epoch and of the class to which he belongs. Man is a function of society and precisely, of his class. Man does not exist, only his class exists. And when classes cease to exist man will cease to exist; there will only be the social collectivity, Communist society. . . .

All the untruths of Communism come from its Godlessness and inhumanity.⁸⁸

All reality and value attributed to personality, Divine and human, are now attributed to a pure abstraction, Class, actually devoid of all concrete reality. Personality itself is concentrated most perfectly in the Class and all the specific and essential prerogatives which had up to now been possessed by the individual human person are appropriated by the Class so that the individual does not possess them actually and exclusively, rather, he merely participates in the total perfection of the Class and any hope of perfectibility must be sought in the Class. Moreover the measure of participation in the perfection of the class is determined by the elite of that Class who can grant or deny such participation guided by one's usefulness to the Class. Robbed of all the perfections of his personality, the individual ceases to be a proper subject of liberty which is a power of person. Liberty thus reverts to the personified Class. Human liberty, therefore, far from being the essential and exclusive property of the individual person, henceforth resides exclusively in the Class. If the individual is conceded any freedom it is merely by way of participation in collective

⁸⁸ Berdyaev, Nicholas, *Vital Realities* (in *Essays in Order*, no. 6), Macmillan Co., 1932, pp. 175-6; 177.

freedom i.e. the freedom that the will of the ruling clique allows; all the vital realities, moral and spiritual, that have accompanied the liberty of the individual person, such as justice, law, rights, personal conscience, goodness, truth, morality, virtue, purpose, life itself, and all the goods conducive, or even necessary, to virtue such as intelligence and willing, and all material goods are concentrated exclusively within the Class so that not even a use of them can be unauthorized. What is good or evil, right or wrong is determined by the will and judgment of the ruling elite of the Class; what is true or false is determined by the intelligence of that elite; what constitutes essential purpose and the means conducive to that purpose, all are determined by the laws of the Class. The function of law is to further the interests of the Class; there is no right except what the social collectivity determines as such and the principal duty of the individual is to recognize the supremacy of the Class and blind obedience to the dictates of the Class is the greatest virtue. Finally, human liberty is the absolute conformity of the individual will with the Class will and its highest expression and greatest perfection consists in absolute blind obedience to Class will as personified by the will of the party elite. Justice is what conforms to the will of the class and promotes its good; injustice is whatever is contrary to it.⁸⁹

Only fanatical religious zeal coupled with the physical arm of the secret police can ensure the popular support of this new religion, for it is a religion of gigantic and monstrous falsehood.

“The Communism of today, more emphatically than similar movements of the past, conceals in itself a *false messianic idea*. A pseudo-ideal of justice, of equality and fraternity in labor impregnates all its doctrines and activity with a deceptive mysticism which communicates a zealous and contagious enthusiasm to the multitudes entrapped by its delusive promises.”⁹⁰

To misconceive Communism as a purely political and economic program is a grave and foolhardy error. Politics and economics

⁸⁹ Gurian, Waldemar, *The Future of Bolshevism*, New York: Sheed and Ward, 1936, pp. 40-41.

⁹⁰ Pius XI, *Divini Redemptoris*, Paulist ed. Five Great Encyclicals, p. 180.

are mere instruments for the implementation of Communist mysticism. Communism is first of all a system of ideas, a destructive philosophy of life, an antihumanism the like of which the world has never witnessed because atheistic materialism was never so well organized and militant. Its unhappy mixture of Feuerbach's materialistic atheism and Hegelian dialectics effected by a man with a fanatical messianic complex of his own, Carl Marx, offers as total a negation of spiritual values and vital realities as ever has been conceived by human mind. Human life is conceived as inspirited with the same blind, brutal, mechanistic forces which flow in the plant and animal. Man and society are reduced to gross matter ruled by necessity and perpetual conflict and governing the evolution of all matter toward an absolute levelling—an idea that completely excludes the idea of God, soul and immortality.⁸¹ Cooperation of individuals with this philosophy is either voluntary or will be gained by means of the most ruthless compulsion which is not only necessary but praiseworthy inasmuch as the end is conceived as justifying any and all means.⁸² Such compulsion, with utter and brutal disregard of human liberty and dignity, is not restricted to the refinements of civilization. It includes anything ranging from subtle psychological stimulation through psychological assault of propaganda, the bigger the lie the better, to the most brutal physical violence which can even induce enemies of the Class to testify against themselves in court. Liberty under such pressures is virtually impossible. Stalin himself states quite frankly:

“The dictatorship of the proletariat is the weapon of the proletarian revolution, its organ, its most important strong-hold, which is called into being first, to crush the resistance of the overthrown exploiters and to consolidate its achievements; secondly, to lead the proletarian revolution to its completion, to lead the revolution onward to the complete victory of socialism. . . . The seizure of power is only the beginning. For a number of reasons, the bourgeoisie overthrown in one country remain for a considerable time stronger than the proletariat which has

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 9; also Sturzo, *op. cit.*, p. 452 sq.

⁸² Pius XI, *Quadragesimo Anno*, *op. cit.*, p. 155.

overthrown it. . . . 'The dictatorship of the proletariat,' says Lenin, 'is a persistent struggle—sanguinary and bloodless, violent and peaceful, military and economic, educational and administrative—against the forces and traditions of the old society.'"⁹³

Revolution is the principal means by which the collectivity is raised to the realm of the absolute and maintained there. Nowhere throughout the violent genesis of this philosophy is there any mention of love and gentleness and compassion, of honor and dignity. Charity is as alien to this thought as God Himself. All other values except the absolute value of Class is destroyed. If some are tolerated temporarily it is only to the extent that they can further the realization of this pseudo-absolute. If there is nothing more sacred than the economic, if the Class is the paragon of all virtue and perfection and the ultimate repository of all rights, the individual obviously has no value in and of himself, but is reduced to the role of a mere bolt or nut in a monstrous machine. And once man's inherent value as derived from his nature and his destiny, is denied one cannot even speak of the right to live, the right to marry, found a family and educate one's children, and, even less, of the right to one's self-perfection by tending toward God along the path marked out by Him.

In this society no order of values would be possible except the economic, crass materialistic values; the sole purpose of society would consist solely in producing a superabundance of material goods for a purely material welfare and by means of brutally enforced collective labor. The price for bread is the human soul. Accordingly there would be no need for moral law or morality itself. The resulting civilization would be a humanity in nothing but name because without God, without true purpose and without the human soul and therefore grossly inhuman.⁹⁴ Why has this system made such great headway and continues to make such violently recessive progress? "We must remember that the way had been prepared already for it by the religious and moral destitution in which the wage-earners had been left by liberal

⁹³ Stalin, Joseph, "*The Problem of Leninism*," New York: International Publishing Co., 1934, pp. 41, 43, 96.

⁹⁴ Pius XI, *Divini Redemptoris*, *op. cit.*, pp. 180-181.

economics."⁹⁵ Not less influential has been the intellectual anarchy characterizing the modern age. Thus all the inhuman evils, all the anti-spiritual forces which have ever appeared in human history are concentrated in the hate, the violence, the brutality and viciousness of Marxian Communism. It has, to quote Christopher Dawson,

"... acquired political form and substance and stands against the Christian Church as a counter-church with its own dogmas, its own moral standards, ruled by a centralized hierarchy and inspired by an intense will to world conquest."⁹⁶

It seeks to conquer the world, pervade every nook and cranny of the universe, for, what God is to the universe that is what Communism seeks to be negatively; where the material universe is completely subject to the spirit, Communism seeks to subject the spiritual universe to matter.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 183.

⁹⁶ *Religion and the Modern State*, New York: Sheed and Ward, 1938, p. 58.

CONCLUSION

The meaning, value, dignity, sacredness and high calling of human liberty have been anchored to the absolute values, spiritual and moral, of Thomistic thought. Human liberty has been shown to be a special endowment of the Creator conferred upon human nature for a definite purpose which goes beyond the purely temporal and coincides with the absolute and final destiny of man himself. Without the value and meaning of the destiny of person, human liberty is not even truly human and has no value or absolute destiny of its own. Linked with the final goal of man, with the destiny of the individual person, it participates in the dignity of person and in his high calling. It then becomes the sublime power which helps man to fulfill all that is in him potentially of Divine Intelligence and Will. Used rightly it guarantees immortality and complete happiness. Thus liberty does not have a plan of its own for which it must labor, rather it is the freely efficient collaborator with the absolute liberty of God. As in its origin it participates in Divine Liberty, so in its destiny it participates in Divine Beatitude, all for the sake of the person in whom it is rooted.

The synthesis of philosophical thought on human liberty began with the development that liberty is a participation of Divine causality and providence on the ontological grounds that every man is a being of rational nature created by God for immortality, a person after the image and likeness of God. In this way liberty was characterized as a sublime power and privilege, and a co-operative participation in the government of the universe toward the absolute final end of that universe, God. Human liberty is thus sacrosanct because its subject, man, is sacred on the basis of his sacred destiny and the Divine image he fulfills.

That this sublime character of human liberty is not merely a matter of factual existence but also of personal operation and activity was the burden of proof of the second chapter. It was shown that man, by the mere possession of his singular nature,

was also in possession of the essential and singular equipment, spiritual powers of intellect and will and their essential properties, by means of which he is able to realize his final destiny which is the development and perfection of his personality. The peculiar and essential human endowment of liberty is rooted in a spiritual will and its cause is the intellect wherefore freedom of judgment must precede any freedom of act.

Both however, intellect and will, do not enjoy an absolute measure of freedom. Physically they are, undetermined, but morally the will is bound to necessary norms of conduct as the intellect is bound by the first principles of knowledge. The operation of liberty in the process of fulfilling human destiny is conditioned first by the demands of Divine Will and Freedom. This is manifested in diverse ways: in the very limitations of human nature itself since it reflects Divine Will, or the natural moral law, whereby human nature becomes the proximate norm of the right and wrong use of liberty; in the demands of rational nature as reflected in the dictates of personal conscience; in the requirements of positive law, human and divine, which reflect the absolute will; more determinately and intelligibly in the requirements of virtue as reflected in private and social living. All these constitute the directives which maintain liberty on its course towards the supreme goal, for liberty without a goal is as unintelligible as man without a personal goal.

Next, the nature of liberty was determined. The power to commit wrong was shown to be utterly alien to the essential concept of human liberty. The various relations of liberty to license, to rights, law, slavery and authority were determined. License was characterized as the abuse and misuse of liberty; rights determine the subject matter and the extent of the substantial power of liberty in the concrete; law guides the proper use of liberty over the proper subject matter; slavery interferes with personal self-development, and if it is extreme, it destroys all possibility of self-perfection; authority and liberty are ultimately derived from one immutable and absolute source, Divine Will, hence there cannot be nor should there be an inevitable conflict, for the essential purpose of each coincides.

Finally, a series of diversified and representative opinions on

human liberty were examined and their deficiencies between modern non-scholastic thought and the traditional scholastic philosophy of human liberty noted. This is not a startling discovery. It is no secret that Christian philosophy has long been repudiated in the realm of secular education. Positivist thought dominates in political, economic and social philosophy as well as in jurisprudence. There is no doubt that there are positivists of good will who uphold the value and necessity of human liberty, but the philosophical foundations on which they built their structure of freedom hardly differ from the foundations which serve no less as grounds for the denial of liberty and the acceptance of totalitarianism. They are faced with the inevitable choice of either accepting the philosophical bases which support their belief in liberty as they would like to have it, or of seeing their edifice of secular faith collapse, due to the shifting of ground which serves totalitarianism as well.

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